

The SPORTS PINK

55p

Supporting **LOCAL** sport **Daily Echo**

WILSON AT THE DOUBLE AS CHERRIES RETAIN TOP SPOT

Wigan v Bournemouth match report – see page 4



dailyecho.co.uk/sport

HOWZAT!



Best batting innings

Player	Runs	Team	Opp	Ground	WC
C Vivian	182	SA	UAE	Rawalpindi	1996
S Ganguly	183	IND	SL	Taunton	1999
V Richards	181	WI	SL	Karachi	1987
N Kapil Dev	175	IND	ZWE	Tbridge Wells	1983
V Sehwag	175	IND	BAN	Dhaka	2011

Best bowling innings

Player	BB	Team	Opp	Ground	WC
G McGrath	7-15	AUS	NAM	Potchefstroom	2003
A Bichel	7-20	AUS	ENG	Port Elizabeth	2003
W Davis	7-51	WI	AUS	Headingley	1983
G Gilmour	6-14	AUS	DVG	Headingley	1975
A Nehra	6-23	IND	ENG	Durban	2003

Fastest hundreds

Player	Balls	Team	Opp	Ground	WC
K D Breen	50	IRE	ENG	Bangalore	2011
M Hayden	66	AUS	SA	Basseterre	2007
J Davison	67	CAN	WI	Centurion	2003

QUARTER-FINALS

Wednesday, March 18, 3.30am SCG, Sydney

WINNER.....

Thursday, March 19, 3.30am MCG, Melbourne

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TERRY PAINE



**Saints legend's
exclusive column**
See page 5

SAINTS



**Transfer window
hits and misses**
See pages 20-23

QPR 0 SAINTS 1

**SADIO Mane's stoppage time winner
fired Saints to a 1-0 win at QPR and
back up to third in the Premier
League table.**

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However, that all changed three minutes into stoppage time when Mane spun on the outside of Nedum Onuoha and rifled a shot into the top corner.

The only downside of the day was a nasty head injury to Matt Targett that saw him taken to the hospital for a precautionary X-ray.

● Match report and reaction: See pages 2-4.

*Sadio's late
winner fires
Saints back
up to third*

**ALL SMILES: Sadio Mane celebrates
his goal. Daily Echo picture by Stuart Martin**

ISSN 0969-563X



9 770969 563069

P 55p ISSN 0969-563X

Published by Newsquest Media (Southern) Ltd, and printed at Newsquest (Southern) Ltd, from its offices at Newspaper House, Test Lane, Redbridge, Southampton, SO16 9JX. Telephone: 023 8042 4800. Registered at the Post Office as a newspaper. 125th year. No. 37525

**AIRLYNX
EXPRESS**

Route A

Romsey - Romsey Bus Station
North Baddesley - Bus Stop by Co-Op
Chandlers Ford - Fryern Arcade
Eastleigh - Bus Station
Winchester - King Alfred Statue

Route B

Romsey - Romsey Bus Station
North Baddesley - Bus Stop by Co-Op
Chandlers Ford - Fryern Arcade
Eastleigh - Bus Station
Shirley - Shirley Precinct

Date

Tues 3rd March
Tues 17th March
Tues 21st April
Wed 29th April
Tues 5th May
Fri 15th May
Thurs 21st May
Sat 23rd May
Thurs 28th May
Tues 9th June

Destination

Basingstoke - Milestones Museum and Shopping
Milets Farm Centre, Abingdon
Salisbury and Salisbury Market
Worcester at Leisure
Royal Tunbridge Wells at Leisure
Afternoon at the Races - Newbury
Stratford upon Avon at Leisure
Cardiff City at Leisure
Train ride on the Bluebell Railway and free time in East Grinstead
Bradford on Avon Canal Cruise

Includes Entrance

Includes Entrance

Includes Cruise Fare

Route

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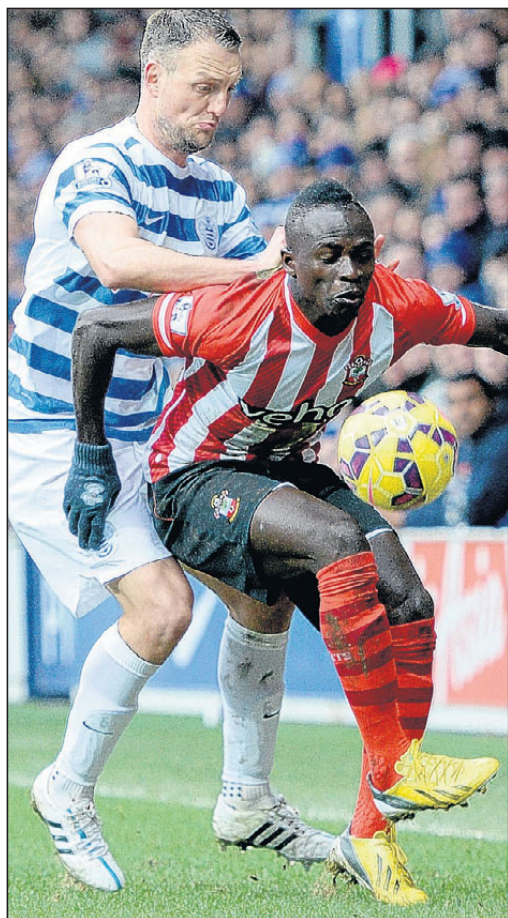
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Saints Spotlight

QPR 0 SAINTS 1: SADIO'S LATE

MANE GIVES BID A SHOT IN



BACKING IN: Sadio Mane shields the ball from QPR's Clint Hill.



WINNER: Sadio Mane celebrates his goal.

SADIO Mane's stoppage time winner fired Saints to a 1-0 win at QPR and back up to third in the Premier League table.

It looked being a frustrating afternoon for Saints, who created a host of first-half chances and dominated the majority of the game but had failed to find the net.

However, that all changed three minutes into stoppage time when Mane spun on the outside of Nedum Onuoha and rifled a shot into the top corner.

The only downside of the day was a nasty head injury to Matt Targett that saw him taken to the hospital for a precautionary X-ray.

Saints had an opening just a couple of minutes into the game.

Nathaniel Clyne whipped in a cross from the right that picked out Graziano Pelle but he couldn't make a clean contact with his effort on the turn with the ball slightly behind him.

Moments later Pelle tried a shot from range but it was a fairly comfortable save for Robert Green.

Saints looked so lively on the break with the pace of Eljero Elia and Sadio Mane and the pair combined to almost give their team the lead on seven minutes.

Mane curled a pass from inside his own half round the back of the QPR defence.

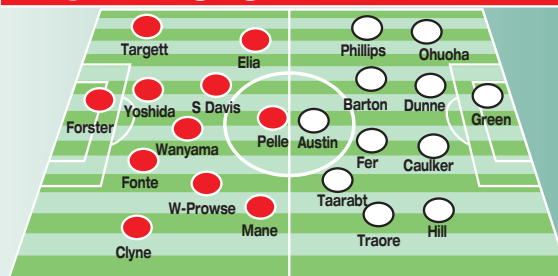
Green charged out but was nowhere near getting to the ball when Elia latched onto it and tried to immediately shoot past the stranded stopper but from 40 yards out it curled wide.

QPR first made an impression on the Saints backline after 11 minutes from a deep left wing free kick but Joey Barton's half volley from just inside the area went well over the bar.

Barton was the first player in the book moments later for chopping down Mane.

The opportunities just kept

The LINE-UPS



SAINTS SUBS: (from) K Davis, Gardos, Reed, Tadic, Schneiderlin, Flannigan, Seager.

QPR SUBS: (from) McCarthy, Isla, Kranjcar, Henry, Vargas, Zamora, Zarate.

RONALD Koeman made three changes to the Saints side that were defeated 1-0 by Swansea for the trip to managerless QPR.

Matt Targett replaced the suspended Ryan Bertrand at left back, with the £10m man serving the first match of a three game ban after his red card against Swansea.

Victor Wanyama returned from injury for his first appearance since the FA Cup third-round replay against Ipswich in mid January in place of Harrison Reed.

Sadio Mane also returned to the team with Dusan Tadic missing out.

Morgan Schneiderlin was back from an adductor injury that kept him out since January but had to make do with a place on the bench.

Adam Leitch
adam.leitch@dailyecho.co.uk
CHIEF SPORTS REPORTER

coming for Saints with Victor Wanyama presented with the chance to volley goalwards from inside the area after James Ward-Prowse's free kick was headed straight to him but he dragged his effort wide of the near post.

UNCONSCIOUS

There was a worrying break in play as Matt Targett appeared to be knocked unconscious by an accidental collision with the leading arm of Matt Phillips, as the pair challenged for a header.

After extensive treatment Targett was stretchered from the field on 26 minutes to be replaced by Florin Gardos.

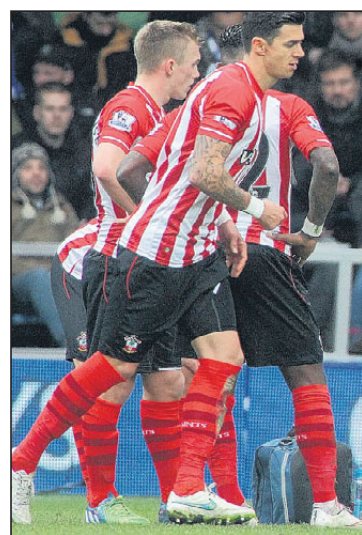
Maya Yoshida switched to left back with Gardos partnering Jose Fonte at centre half.

Mane looked lively again after the restart, controlling the ball on his chest and cutting in across the face of the area from the right before dragging in a left footed shot that Green dived to his left to stop.

Mane troubled Green again on 33 minutes as he burst past Clint Hill and managed to toe poke a shot towards goal as he lost balance which Green tipped just wide.

Ward-Prowse whipped in an outswinging corner that was met by a volley with the outside of the boot from ten yards out by Fonte but it struck the bar.

Mane got in again via a Steven Davis through ball but Hill put enough physical pressure on him not to concede a



penalty but to also ensure he could only stab a shot wide.

Adel Taarabt tried to respond for QPR but his rasping drive from distance was straight at Fraser Forster.

There was seven minutes of first-half stoppage time after the long break in play following Targett's injury.

Elia tried to make the most of it as he got in behind but his low drive picked out Green at the near post.

The winger then took a whack where it hurts most from Richard Dunne but won his side a free kick on the edge of the area that Ward-Prowse bent around the outside of the wall and just wide.

The half finally ended goal-less but with Saints wondering how they weren't in front after total domination and a host of chances.

Saints started the second period also on the front foot but were given a reminder when a cross from the left rebounded up off of Clyne to Armand Traore who headed into the side netting from a tight angle.

Hill went in the book for a tug on Mane as Saints' front three

READ THE BEAUTIFUL SOUTH COLUMN ON PAGE 6

Saints Spotlight



STRIKE FIRES KOEMAN'S MEN BACK UP TO THIRD

EUROPE THE ARM



WORRYING: The referee calls for a stretcher as Saints' Matt Targett receives treatment after suffering a head injury in an accidental collision with the leading arm of Matt Phillips.



FALL GUY: Adel Taarabt is tackled by Victor Wanyama.



LEFT: James Ward-Prowse battles for the ball with Joey Barton.

played even higher up the pitch in search of a goal.

Saints made a change on the hour mark with Morgan Schneiderlin replacing Wanyama.

Mane had another half chance moments later as he got onto the end of Pelle's flick on but from the edge of the area he sliced well over the bar.

Rangers made their first switch with Mauro Zarate coming on for Taarabt.

He made an immediate impact as he stretched to reach Phillips' right wing cross but he couldn't get any power behind the shot and from a few yards out it just looped up to Forster.

Rangers made another substitution with Traore replaced

by Mauricio Isla.

After all Saints' pressure they had Forster to thank for keeping the scores level after a wonder save on 73 minutes.

A half cleared corner fell to Barton on the edge of the area, he drove a bobbling shot into the box that was deflected six yards out by Charlie Austin but the stopper instinctively threw out his right arm and batted it over the bar.

SCARE

After Elia went down via the challenge of Hill with nothing given right on the edge of the box Schneiderlin became the first Saints player in the book for a foul on Zarate.

Saints made a final change on 79 minutes with Dusan Tadic coming on for Elia.

QPR responded with Eduardo Vargas replacing Dunne.

Zarate gave Saints a scare as he cut in from the left wing and

unleashed a shot from 20 yards out that flew narrowly over the bar.

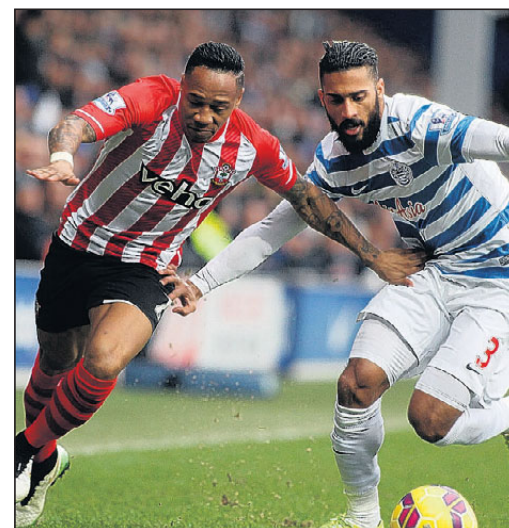
Just as the game looked as though it was going to fizzle out into a frustrating draw for Saints they finally got a goal three minutes into four of stoppage time.

Tadic played the ball out to the left and Yoshida who immediately who turned it into Mane.

He spun on the outside of Nedum Onuoha and quickly rifled a left-footed shot across goal that rocketed past Green and into the opposite top corner.

There was more late drama as QPR scrambled the ball over the line after a melee in the six-yard box but the flag was correctly raised for offside.

That proved to be the last action of a game that provided such a vital three points for Saints in their quest for European football.



PACE RACE: Nathaniel Clyne tries to beat Armand Traore to the ball.

SAINTS SEASON 2014/15 STATISTICS - SEE PAGE 8



BRACE: Callum Wilson, right.

Wilson at double as Cherries stay top

TWO goals from Callum Wilson and another from strike partner Yann Kermorgant saw Bournemouth cement their position at the top of the Sky Bet Championship with a 3-1 victory at struggling Wigan.

However, the scoreline only told part of the story as Wigan enjoyed solid spells in both halves only to fail to make the most of them.

After James McClean had hit the bar with a free-kick, Wilson opened the scoring nine minutes before half-time – with more than a hint of offside about it.

However, there was no argument three minutes later when Kermorgant doubled the lead following a bad mistake by Chris McCann.

It looked game over just before the hour mark when Wilson made it three with a cool finish, although Leon Clarke marked his Wigan debut with a goal shortly after that which at least made for an entertaining last half-hour.

Despite their lowly league position, it was Wigan who took the game to their visitors right from the off.

William Kvist saw an early daisy-cutter well held by Artur Boruc, while Clarke's clever cross from the left deserved better than no-one gambling to get on the end of it.

Wigan came closer still moments later when McClean swung in a free-kick from the left that beat Boruc all ends up, only to bounce off the crossbar and away to safety.

But Bournemouth seemed to take heart from the let-off and started to grow into the game.

A great counter-

attack down the left saw Matt Ritchie's shot deflect wide off Andrew Taylor and only a great block by Kvist prevented Simon Charlton's effort testing Ali Al Habsi.

The Wigan goalkeeper was required to pull off a fine save to deny Kermorgant from close range, before Matt Ritchie blasted way over the top from the edge of the area.

Wigan threatened again when Kim Bo-Kyung's overhead kick flew just over the bar, but the hosts were rocked on their heels just before the break when Bournemouth gained a stranglehold on the game.

First Wilson raced on to a flick-on by Kermorgant and, despite looking well offside, slid the ball under Al Habsi.

Then McCann was caught in possession on the edge of his own box and Kermorgant punished him by drilling the ball into the bottom corner.

Wilson should have made it three ten minutes after the restart, only to shoot over with only Al Habsi to beat, but the striker made amends a minute later by notching his second goal, rounding the goalkeeper before slotting into an empty net.

Wigan pulled one back within two minutes as Clarke nodded home McClean's inviting cross, and the introduction off the bench of Liverpool loanee Sheyi Ojo saw Wigan ask some probing questions of the Cherries defence.

Liam Ridgewell saw a header tipped over by Boruc, with substitute Billy McKay having a late shot that he thought struck the hand of a defender, only for the official to rule no penalty.

Saints Spotlight

KOEMAN HAILS VITAL VICTORY



LATE SHOW: Sadio Mane slams in Saints' winner.

RONALD Koeman believes Saints' 1-0 win at QPR could prove to be a vital moment in the season.

After being hit by a sucker punch defeat at home to Swansea last weekend, Saints bounced back with a victory at Loftus Road.

It came via a Sadio Mane injury time winner but it was a game Saints dominated.

The three points lifted Saints back up to third in the table and Koeman said: "It's not all about the first four places in the table.

"It's trying to reach a European position for next sea-

Adam Leitch

adam.leitch@dailyecho.co.uk

CHIEF SPORTS REPORTER

son. That will be the target and maybe the seventh place is enough or maybe the sixth place on the table.

"I think the way we play today and for sure the result was very important.

"I think you have always in a season some key moments during the season and one of these was today after the defeat of last week to show our way how we like to play football, to have a good result and

that's very important and very good.

"It's the fourth win in a row away and that's fantastic."

He added: "I think it was a little bit similar to last week. I think we played good football, we were the dominating team until the last ten minutes, we had some good chances but we didn't score.

'PROUD'

"The team was doing very well and I'm proud of the players.

"They made it very difficult, it

was really a battle and it wasn't a 0-0 game because there were a lot of battles in the midfield, some good chances for Southampton and later QPR and finally maybe the most lucky because ten minutes before the end Fraser had a fantastic save by 0-0.

"We scored finally the winning goal, I think well deserved and a great spirit of the players and after last week it's a great feeling.

"If you score in the last minute even with a draw I was happy with the performance of the players and a little bit more now with the three points."

Targett taken to hospital

SAINTS defender Matt Targett has been taken to hospital after he was stretchered off in the first-half of today's game at QPR.

The 19-year-old appeared to be caught by an arm in an aerial challenge with Matt Phillips during the early stages of this afternoon's match.

Targett was left lying flat out on the pitch, face down, for several minutes while he received medical treatment.

His head and neck were stabilised and he was given oxygen through a mask, as he was carried off.

Saints confirmed he had

been taken straight to hospital for a precautionary X-ray, and after the game Koeman confirmed the youngster was doing well.

He said: "He's under control and that's very good news because always on your head something happens on the pitch it's difficult and dangerous but the remarks of the doctor is he is under control in hospital and that is very positive and good news."

RIGHT: Matt Targett receives treatment on the pitch.



LATEST PREMIER LEAGUE STANDINGS - PAGE 46

Paine's World

The Saints legend's **EXCLUSIVE** column on all things football

ALL CHANGE IN CHAMPIONSHIP

WITH the excessive number of managerial changes that have occurred in the division since the last transfer window shut, in September, it is hardly surprising that Championship clubs were the busiest in January.

But are the deals being done really likely to help the teams making them, and is it really possible to predict their success?

As the summer window closed, it really seemed that Nottingham Forest fans had plenty of reasons to be happy.

Not only had they managed to keep the core of a good squad together, but they had invested significantly in improving it as well, leading many people (myself included) to suggest they would be pushing for promotion come May.

Instead, Forest have dropped to 12th in the table and have ended January with just two loan players and a new manager to bolster a struggling squad. The real key was their marquee signing, Britt Assombalonga.

By the end of September he had scored eight goals and was looking to be worth every bit of the massive £5m fee he commanded.

However, like many strikers, he couldn't maintain that form long-term, and he has managed only six goals in the four months since.

The decrease in production after mid-October from their two new strikers – Matty Fryatt being the other one – meant the team's average goals scored dropped by almost half.

Forest's expensive signings over the previous season also led to a transfer ban, after it was deemed they breached financial fair play rules.

It may not stop Forest from bringing in players, as their loan signings show, but it does make things difficult.

Add in a manager, Stuart Pearce, whose playing style was heavily criticised, and the eighth worst defence in the division, and you start to see why they are mid-table and why it is so difficult to predict at the start of the Championship season which teams have made the best deals.

The manager and tactics selected are equally as important in a league where squad cost rarely equates to finishing position.

If you can't get the best out of your players, you won't stay in a job, as many have found out. When it comes to the January window, picking the teams that have made good signings may be a little easier.

You already know something of a team's form and squad strength to assess what they need to improve.

With this in mind, it makes sense that two of the busiest clubs in January are at the wrong end of the table.

Both Leeds United and Wigan Athletic have been very active this window, although maybe

not in the right way.

Wigan, in the relegation zone, have seen seven players leave the club, including the highly-rated Callum McManaman, who departed for West Brom.

While they may have replaced some of these players, it's a big gamble for a club so near the bottom of the table to drastically overhaul their squad at this point in the season.

Leeds, like Forest, are currently under a transfer embargo, caused by breaching FFP last year, but they weren't going to let that stop them from being active in the market.

There are certain loopholes in the transfer ban that allow clubs to sign free players, as long as they do not exceed a certain squad size or wage.

This has resulted in Leeds doing what they currently do best – heading to Italy in search of new talent.

But loaning players from Italian clubs hasn't really worked so far for them, so it is somewhat surprising that they didn't look more at the home market for some experience.

The window also saw Leeds sell two of their most experienced players – Jason Pearce and Stephen Warnock, both of whom have captained the side this season.

Letting Warnock leave may reduce the wage bill considerably, but it also leaves the team without one of their most experienced defenders.

Warnock's new side, Derby County, on the other hand, have done exactly what a team pushing for promotion should do.

By signing Warnock and loaning Darren Bent from Aston Villa, they have increased their squad depth without spending excessive amounts.

Of course, you can't talk about transfers without mentioning Blackpool, who seem to be attempting to break a record.

Having already transferred 30 players into the club since June, they didn't want to be left out again, adding another ten since the turn of the year. With the 13 players they have released, you really have to wonder if the fans bother getting players' names on the back of their shirts.

With squads now set – at least until the loan window opens next week – it will be interesting to see who will be deemed the transfer window winners come May.

LOAN STAR: Darren Bent is one of the players who moved in the January window, joining Derby County for the rest of the season



Sadness at loss of a great Saints supporter

IT IS with great sadness that I recently learned of the death of Ted Tarbet, from the Isle of Wight.

Ted was the most loyal of Saints supporters. I can remember him from the early Sixties, following the team around not just in England but abroad as well.

In those days, he and his wife, Janet, helped to run the Isle of Wight Supporters' Club, of which I became president.

I always really looked forward to attending the end-of-season dinners on the island, accompanied by some of the players – back then, there was a tight bond with the supporters.

Until just recently, Ted kept in touch with John Sydenham and myself. Every Sunday afternoon the phone would go here in South Africa and it would be Ted relating to me what had gone on at the game the previous day.

Also, he would send a parcel to John, in Australia, and to myself, containing copies of the Sports Pink, and there was never a Christmas without an Isle of Wight calendar dropping through the door.

To discover that he had collapsed after the Ipswich cup match with a heart attack, and was rushed to hospital, only to die some two weeks later, has come as a great shock to John and myself.

On my visits to St Mary's, I would meet up with him by the statue of Ted Bates to sign books and photos.

He was the kindest of persons and deeply committed to the Saints.

My condolences go out to Janet and the family. It is like a long chapter in John's and my life has come to an end, and it is sad to think that Ted will not be there to see the end of what could be Saints' greatest season ever.

Sports Quiz

1. Jack Wilshere had a loan spell at which club in 2010?
2. In 2012 Australia captain Michael Clarke became the first cricketer to achieve what milestone?
3. What is Tiger Woods' full birth name?
4. Shaun Edwards has represented England, Great Britain and which other nation?
5. Matthew Stafford is the quarterback for which NFL side?
6. Who scored for Everton when they last beat Merseyside rivals Liverpool 2-0 at Goodison Park in 2010?
7. Which Moroccan opened the scoring for Tottenham as they lost a thrilling north London derby 5-4 to Arsenal in 2004?
8. How many majors has Rory McIlroy won?
9. Which Welshman grabbed a brace of tries when Grand Slam-chasing England were humbled 30-3 at the Millennium Stadium in 2013?
10. How old was Novak Djokovic when he won his first Grand Slam title at the 2008 Australian Open?
11. Aaron Lennon joined Tottenham from which club in 2005?
12. Who will drive alongside Daniel Ricciardo at Red Bull this year?
13. In which year did Italy compete in their first Six Nations Championship?
14. What is the name of the Briton who reached this year's Australian Open girls' final?
15. Where will the 2018 Winter Olympics be held?
16. Which South African holds the record for the most catches (five) by a non-wicketkeeper in a single One-Day International?
17. Which super middleweight boxer had a 19-0 record before suffering back-to-back losses to Carl Froch?
18. Where did Leicester City play their home matches for over 100 years up until 2002?
19. Which former Yorkshire and Somerset captain is England's youngest-ever Test cricketer?
20. Which Englishman did Ronnie O'Sullivan beat in the finals of the 2008 and 2012 World Championship?

ANSWERS

1. Bolton; 2. Score four double hundreds in a calendar year; 3. Eldrick Tont Woods; 4. Ireland; 5. The Detroit; 6. Tim Cahill and Mikael Arteta; 7. Nourredine Naybet; 8. Four; 9. Alex Cuthbert; 10. 20; 11. Leeds; 12. Danill Kyat; 13. 2000; 14. Katie Swan; 15. Pyeongchang, South Korea; 16. Jonty Rhodes; 17. George Groves; 18. Filbert Street; 19. Brian Close; 20. Ali Carter.

DREAM ON, POCHETTINO

"EASY TASK":
Spurs boss
Mauricio
Pochettino and,
below, Harry
Redknapp.

BEAUTIFUL SOUTH

BY DAREN WHEELER

IT was a week of managers. One resigned, the other came across as severely deluded.

Harry Redknapp jumped ship at Queens Park Rangers, citing a knee operation for his departure.

Not impending relegation, nor a spiralling wage bill or a club in turmoil...

Oh no, poor Arry's knees need an operation and off he goes.

It's made all the more ironic that Redknapp had open heart surgery in November 2011, when Tottenham manager, and didn't feel the need to resign.

What's so different now?

The thought of relegation?

Redknapp's work at Southampton could only be described as an astounding cyclone of misery.

Portsmouth were left in a mess that they will probably never get out of, a staggering car crash of a club.

Redknapp will no doubt tell you it wasn't his fault, but at what stage is a manager responsible for the budget at a club?

If Redknapp isn't responsible for Pompey's fall, who is?

The men who wrote the cheques, or the man who suggested they do so?

All he's done now is deprived Saints fans the pleasure of sending him on his way.

Losing to Southampton could have been the final nail in his coffin.

Meanwhile, back in La La Land, Mauricio Pochettino came out with quite possibly the most ridiculous statement Saints fans have seen in many a year.

In an interview to Spanish radio, the Argentinian claimed Ronald Koeman had an easy job as Saints boss.

He said: "It is always easier taking over a winning team which is the case this time with Ronald [Koeman]."

"We came here (Tottenham) and had to reinvent things.

"We always laugh about it because we left a team at Southampton that practically trained itself after a year and a half to come here where we had to recreate everything that we had done at Southampton, pretty much from zero, but it's a great challenge."

Firstly, it makes you wonder what sort of manager lets a team train itself, practically or not.

But, most importantly, what sort of planet does Pochettino does live on?

If anything, you'd have to raise the point that he'd inherited a good squad from Nigel Adkins, but more importantly point out his shocking record on the transfer market.

Has everyone forgotten Dani Osvaldo?

A man who is arguably the worst player ever to have put on a Saints shirt.

No, instead

Pochettino has the temerity to suggest that Koeman just waltzed in and took over a thriving club, left in perfect health by the Argentinian.

In truth, Koeman inherited an absolute shambles.

Five first team players either sold or about to leave and the club in absolute chaos. What part of that can Pochettino not see?

Even if he wanted to claim some of the credit, you have to be remarkably stupid to think the Dutchman had anything other than a Herculean task to keep Saints up.

If anything, Pochettino inherited a club that had already spent £80 million with the Gareth Bale transfer money.

To suggest he had to "tough it out" and "start from scratch" is laughable.

If anything, under Pochettino Spurs have gone backwards.

Yes, they are in a cup final but for a club with Champions League aspirations, surely the League Cup is an absolute necessity?

Certainly it's viewed as being the least of the trophies available but for a so called big club surely the League Cup should be viewed as a minimum achievement?

Pochettino is a good manager, but to view him as some sort of messiah for taking a team worth over £150 million to the League Cup final is just laughable.

To try to take some of the credit for Koeman's miraculous work at Southampton is equally laughable.

But then again, what do we expect from a man who suddenly learnt how to speak English the moment he left St Mary's?

In closing, one manager has taken, I believe, an easy way out.

The other, whilst undoubtedly talented, is quite obviously lacking in humility or class.

Ronald Koeman reacted with typical class at Pochettino's claims.

"I am happy in Southampton and thank you, Mauricio, I have an easy job and that was the reason I came to Southampton, to have a little bit of a holiday with a good team and good organisation with good players."

Take note, Mauricio.

That's how you deal with idiots

...

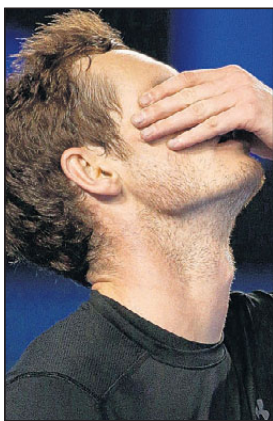


THE PINK & DAILY ECHO: BEST FOR FOOTBALL OPINION

Adam Rant



This week's big talking points
with **Adam Leitch**



Murray's meltdown

WE KNOW that top level sport is often as much about the mental side of the game as the physical one, but rarely do we see it laid bare.

Last weekend we had the perfect example in the case of individual sport, where there really is no hiding place, as Andy Murray, left, had a meltdown in the Australian Open final.

He and Novak Djokovic were hammering at it toe-to-toe for two sets before Murray just crumbled before the watching world and beat a humbling retreat as the

Serbian eased to victory.

For Murray this has been a career trait, but one he appeared to overcome as he lifted two Grand Slam titles.

Whatever the reasons for his spilt with coach Ivan Lendl, it seemed a curious decision given how amazingly he had transformed Murray mentally.

In a team sport, we have seen it with QPR.

Harry Redknapp's surprise departure this week brought out the statistics of their season.

Rangers have been in very

respectable form at Loftus Road, but have lost all 11 of their away league matches.

There comes a point where it is clearly just a mental barrier.

There are differences to playing at home and away in respect of pressure and expectation and how you adapt to that tactically, but there is no excuse for such a one-sided record.

Collectively, the team obviously have a mental block that they just cannot overcome.

They need their own Lendl now.

Kelly's exit is the end of an era

ENGLAND'S greatest ever female player retired from international football this week to much less fanfare than she deserved.

Kelly Smith has been a class apart in an England career that has spanned the best part of 20 years.

Her goalscoring prowess of course catches the eye, with a record 46 in 117 appearances for her country.

But Smith, below, has been more important than that to England. She has been talismanic figure, a leader and somebody who pushed the boundaries.

In her earlier years Smith was so far above the rest of her colleagues it was unreal.

She had class and skill and talent on a level that broke the mould for women's football in this country and made her as entertaining to watch as any of her male equivalents.



Her story is compelling on a human level as well as she struggled to cope, battling addictions and personal demons, as well as some serious injuries too.

But she came through all that, and her career has raised the bar for English women's football, making others aspire to be like her.

A unique talent she undoubtedly is, but her impact is so much more important for English women's football.

Smith deserved greater hoopla and praise following the announcement, but her place in history is assured anyway.

● SKY Sports tried their best on transfer deadline day, assuring people a huge domino effect of moves could happen at any moment.

Predictably, it didn't and even they looked as resigned to the fact that this day would again prove a great fuss over nothing.

Their coverage is now almost a parody of itself. Time to tone it down.

Saints must strike while they have Ron

IF Saints are ever to make the breakthrough and turn themselves into a team regularly competing in Europe, then they must seize the chance to make that step up while Ronald Koeman is in charge.

Saints are always keen to point out that their success is never about one person, but there can be no doubting just how key their current manager is.

Koeman is as cool, calm and collected as they come, but what's always most impressive is how he handles himself.

Having been such a superstar player in his time, he has a certain swagger.

It is arrogance to a degree, but not in an unlikeable way. Perhaps it is best described as self-confidence.

The way he controls certain situations is a master class in modern management.

Some Saints managers have seemed scared of their own shadow when it comes to dealing with the media.

Yet this week Koeman spoke so confidently about potential signings, about his players, about the comments from Mauricio Pochettino that suggested he had handed his successor a fairly easy job.

It was funny, classy and totally self-assured.

There was no way you

could fail to be impressed by him, once again.

All of this has rubbed off on the team.

Though there have been a couple of blips in recent weeks, they too have embodied the traits of their manager.

Calmness, focus, determination and drive, and also a certain amount of belief that they belong at the top level.

For Saints, opportunities such as the one they are currently presented with – finishing in the European qualification spots in the league – do not come around often.

Indeed, in the modern era of the game since the influx of massive TV money, they have not existed.

The last time Saints played in Europe as a result of their league position was 30 years ago, in 1984/85.

They would have played in the UEFA Cup the following season, though, had English clubs not been banned as a result of the Heysel tragedy.

With the big clubs pretty much shutting out the rest, it's hard to imagine too many more chances ... unless Saints can take this opportunity and force their way in.

If you can get in, and stay in, then you have a chance of making that breakthrough a more permanent affair.

But these chances are so few and far between, and so

dependent on a small number of factors.

In the case of Saints, Koeman is very much one of those.

Even with this same group of players, it's hard to imagine many other managers being able to produce the same atmosphere and ultimately the same results as Koeman has done.

He is unique, a real one off, who was a great appointment for Saints and has proven to be the perfect man at the perfect time.

If Saints are to realistically attempt that next step up as a club then, for all the admirable talk of structures and team work, then they need to make their move while Koeman is here.

This guy will manage Barcelona one day, if he wants to. He will manage the Dutch national team one day, if he wants to.

He is that good.

Right now he is at Saints, and everything has conspired to bring together a unique chance.

They need to make it count ... now.



Saints Spotlight



SAINTS' FIRST TEAM FIXTURES AND RESULTS 2014/15

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
AUGUST														
Sat 17 LiverpoolA	L 1-2	Forster	Clyne 1	Fonte	Yoshida	Bertrand	Schneiderlin	Wanyama	Tadic*	S Davis**	W-Prowse	Pelle	Long*	Isgrove**
Sat 23 West BromH	D 0-0	Forster	Clyne	Fonte	Yoshida	Bertrand	Schneiderlin	Wanyama	Tadic	S Davis*	W-Prowse**	Pelle	Long*	Cork**
Tues 26 Millwall (LC 2)A	W 2-0	Forster	Clyne	Fonte	Yoshida	Targett	S Davis	Wanyama**	Isgrove*	Long***	W-Prowse	Pelle 1	Tadic*	Cork 1**
Sat 30 West HamA	W 3-1	Forster	Clyne	Fonte	Yoshida	Bertrand	Schneiderlin 2	S Davis	Tadic	W-Prowse**	Long*	Pelle 1	Ramirez*	Ramirez***
SEPTEMBER														
Sat 13 NewcastleH	W 4-0	Forster	Clyne	Fonte	Alderweireld	Bertrand	Cork 1***	Schneiderlin 1	S Davis	Tadic**	Long*	Pelle 2	Wanyama*	W-Prowse**
Sat 20 SwanseaA	W 1-0	Forster	Clyne	Fonte	Yoshida*	Bertrand	Cork**	Schneiderlin	W-Prowse***	Tadic	Long	Pelle	Gardos*	S Davis**
Tues 23 Arsenal (LC3)A	W 2-1	Forster	Clyne 1	Fonte	Gardos	Targett**	Wanyama	Schneiderlin	S Davis	Tadic 1	Mane*	Pelle	Long*	Bertrand**
Sat 27 QPRH	W 2-1	Forster	Clyne	Fonte	Alderweireld	Bertrand 1	Wanyama**	Schneiderlin	S Davis	Tadic***	Mane*	Pelle 1	Long*	Cork**
OCTOBER														
Sun 5 TottenhamA	L 0-1	Forster	Clyne	Fonte	Alderweireld	Bertrand	Wanyama*	Schneiderlin	S Davis	Tadic	Mane	Pelle	Long*	Gardos***
Sat 18 SunderlandH	W 8-0	Forster	Clyne	Fonte	Alderweireld	Bertrand	Cork 1	Schneiderlin***	S Davis*	Tadic 1	Long**	Pelle 2**	Wanyama 1*	Wanyama 1***
Sat 25 StokeH	W 1-0	Forster	Clyne	Fonte	Alderweireld	Bertrand	Cork*	Schneiderlin	S Davis**	Tadic	Mane 1	Pelle	Wanyama*	Targett***
Weds 29 Stoke (LC4)A	W 3-2	Forster	Clyne	Fonte	Gardos**	Targett	Wanyama	Schneiderlin	S Davis*	Tadic	Long 1	Pelle 2	Cork*	Targett***
NOVEMBER														
Sat 1 HullA	W 1-0	Forster	Clyne	Fonte	Alderweireld	Bertrand	Wanyama 1	Schneiderlin	S Davis	Tadic**	Long*	Pelle	Mane*	Cork**
Sat 8 LeicesterH	W 2-0	Forster	Clyne	Fonte	Alderweireld	Bertrand	Wanyama	Schneiderlin***	S Davis*	Tadic	Mane**	Pelle	Cork*	Long** 2
Mon 24 Aston VillaA	D 1-1	Forster	Clyne 1	Fonte	Alderweireld	Bertrand	Wanyama	Schneiderlin	Long**	Tadic	Mane*	Pelle	Mayuka*	Cork**
Sun 30 Man CityH	L 0-3	Forster	Clyne	Fonte	Alderweireld	Bertrand	Wanyama	Schneiderlin*	S Davis***	Tadic	Mane**	Pelle	Yoshida*	Long**
DECEMBER														
Weds 3 ArsenalA	L 0-1	Forster	Clyne	Fonte	Alderweireld	Bertrand	Wanyama	Cork*	S Davis	Tadic**	Long***	Pelle	Yoshida*	Mane**
Mon 8 Man UnitedH	L 1-2	Forster	Clyne	Fonte	Yoshida	Bertrand	Wanyama	S Davis	Long**	Tadic*	Mane	Pelle 1	Hesketh*	Mayuka**
Sat 13 BurnleyA	L 0-1	Forster	Clyne	Fonte	Alderweireld	Bertrand	Wanyama	S Davis	Hesketh*	Tadic	Mane**	Pelle	W-Prowse*	Long**
Tues 16 Sheff Utd (LC5)A	L 0-1	Forster	Clyne	Fonte	Gardos	Targett*	Wanyama***	Schneiderlin	W-Prowse	Bertrand	Mane**	Long	Isgrove*	Mayuka**
Sat 20 EvertonH	W 3-0	Forster	Clyne	Fonte	Alderweireld	Yoshida 1	Bertrand	Reed	W-Prowse*	S Davis	Long**	Pelle 1	Targett*	Gape**
Fri 26 Crystal PalaceA	W 3-1	Forster	Clyne***	Gardos	Alderweireld 1	Yoshida	Bertrand 1	Schneiderlin	W-Prowse	S Davis*	Mane 1	Pelle**	Wanyama*	Long**
Sat 28 ChelseaH	D 1-1	Forster	Yoshida**	Fonte	Alderweireld	Targett	Wanyama	Schneiderlin	S Davis***	Tadic*	Mane 1	Pelle	W-Prowse*	Gardos**
JANUARY														
Thurs 1 ArsenalH	W 2-0	Forster	Alderweireld	Fonte	Gardos**	Bertrand	Wanyama	S Davis	W-Prowse	Tadic*** 1	Mane* 1	Pelle	Reed*	Yoshida**
Sun 4 Ipswich (FAC 3)H	D 1-1	Forster	W-Prowse	Fonte	Gardos	Bertrand	Wanyama	Schneiderlin 1	Long	S Davis	Tadic*	Pelle	Isgrove*	Long**
Sun 11 Man UnitedA	W 1-0	Forster	Clyne	Fonte	Alderweireld*	Bertrand	Wanyama	Schneiderlin	W-Prowse	S Davis***	Elia**	Pelle	Gardos*	Tadic** 1
Weds 14 Ipswich (FAC 3)A	W 1-0	Forster	Clyne	Fonte	Gardos	Bertrand	Targett	Wanyama*	Reed	W-Prowse	Tadic**	Long 1	S Davis*	Pelle**
Sat 17 NewcastleA	W 2-1	Forster	Clyne	Fonte	Gardos	Bertrand	Reed	S Davis	Tadic**	W-Prowse*	Elia*** 2	Pelle	Cork*	Long**
Sat 24 Crystal Palace (FAC 4)H	L 2-3	Forster	Clyne	Fonte	Gardos*	Bertrand	Cork**	S Davis	Tadic	W-Prowse	Elia	Pelle 1	Targett*	Long***
FEBRUARY														
Sun 1 SwanseaH	L 0-1	Forster	Clyne	Fonte	Yoshida	Bertrand	Reed*	S Davis	Tadic	W-Prowse	Elia**	Pelle	Mane*	Seager**
Sat 7 QPRA														
Weds 11 West HamH														
Sun 22 LiverpoolH														
Sat 28 West BromA														
MARCH														
Tue 3 Crystal PalaceH														
Sun 15 ChelseaA														
Sat 21 BurnleyH														
APRIL														
Sat 4 EvertonA														
Sat 11 HullH														
Sat 18 StokeA														
Sat 25 TottenhamH														
MAY														
Sat 2 SunderlandA														
Sat 9 LeicesterA														
Sat 16 Aston VillaH														
Sun 24 Man CityA														

	LA	LG	CA	CG	CSA	CSG		LA	LG	CA	CG	CSA	CSG		LA	LG	CA	CG	CSA	CSG
ARTUR BORUC	0	0	0	0	50	0	NATHANIEL CLYNE	21	2	6	1	85(5)	5	SAM GALLAGHER	0	0	0	0	3(17)	2
CODY CROPPER	0	0	0	0	0	0	JACK CORK	5(7)	2	1(3)	1	128(25)	3	SHANE LONG	9(11)	2	5(2)	1	14(13)	3
KELVIN DAVIS	0	0	0	0	292(1)	0	HARRISON REED	3(3)	0	1	0	5(10)	0	EMMANUEL MAYUKA	0(5)	0	0(1)	0	3(16)	1
FRASER FORSTER	23	0	7	0	30	0	MORGAN SCHNEIDERLIN	16	3	4	1	220(31)	14	GRAZIANO PELLE	23	8	5(1)	4	28(1)	12
PAULO GAZZANIGA	0	0	0	0	18(1)	0	VICTOR WANYAMA	14(5)	3	6	0	40(9)	3	JAY RODRIGUEZ	0	0	0	0	59(17)	26
RYAN BERTRAND	22	2	4(1)	0	27(1)	2	STEVEN DAVIS	21(1)	0	5(1)	0	83(19)	6	JAKE HESKETH	1(1)	0	0	0	1(1)	0
MATT TARGETT	1(3)	0	5(1)	0	6(4)	0	LLOYD ISGROVE	0(1)	0	1(2)	0	2(4)	0	DOMINIC GAPE	0(1)	0	0	0	0(1)	0
JOSE FONTE	22	0	7	0	206(5)	13	SAM MCQUEEN	0	0	0	0	0(1)	0	JASON MCCARTHY	0(1)	0	0	0	0(1)	0
FLORIN GARDOS	3(5)	0	6	0	9(5)	0	GASTON RAMIREZ	0(1)	0	0(1)	0	27(23)	8	ELJERO ELIA	3	2	1	0	4	2
TOBY ALDERWEIRELD	16	1	0(2)	0	16(2)	1	DUSAN TADIC	20(1)	3	5(1)	1	25(2)	4	RYAN SEAGER	0(1)	0	0(1)	0	0(2)	0
MAYA YOSHIDA	9(3)	1	1	0	56(4)	3	SADIO MANE	11(4)	4	2	0	13(4)	4							
JACK STEPHENS	0	0	0	0	0(1)	0	JAMES WARD-PROWSE	10(3)	0	5	0	45(33)	1							

KEY: LA: league appearances. LG: league goals. CA: cup appearances. CG: cup goals. CSA: career Saints appearances. CSG: career Saints goals.

Non-league Action

SPITFIRES FIGHT BACK FOR DRAW

EASTLEIGH were almost punished by Vanarama Conference strugglers AFC Telford United today but a James Constable equaliser eight minutes from time salvaged a point for the Spitfires in a breathless 3-3 draw at the Silverlake Stadium.

Visiting goalkeeper Freddy Hall was helpless but to deflect into his own net from Will Evans's low ball within the opening ten minutes to give the home side a deserved lead, writes **PETER HOWARD**

And it looked as if the hosts, playing just their second game in 28

days, would then control the game. But after a dominant half hour, defender Jamie Turley limped off and things drastically changed for Richard Hill's men.

Four minutes before the break Telford top-scorer Tony Gray – who scored a hat-trick in December in the reverse fixture (which Eastleigh won 4-3) – struck to make it 1-1.

Adam Farrell and Sam Smith gave United – who are a far different proposition since Steve Kittrick took charge just before Christmas – a two-goal cushion before Constable netted his 13th in all competitions to grab the point.

Spitfires goalkeeper, Ross Flitney,

spent the opening half hour as a spectator – bar a couple of well handled crosses and a clearance or two – as his team-mates masterminded some delightful attacking football.

Hill's side could, and should, have gone into the break with three goals to their name but, instead, they only managed the one and let a Bucks side there for the taking back into the match with four minutes left of the opening 45.

Evans helped break the deadlock just eight minutes in when he burst into the box chasing a Jai Reason through ball. The right back squared the ball hard into the six yard box, with Constable waiting to pounce.

But, before it got to the former Oxford man, it ricocheted off keeper Hall and into the net.

Eastleigh then dominated, nothing indicated what was to come. Harry Pell on his debut after signing from AFC Wimbledon recently in the centre of midfield was the orchestrator.

Brian Howard, another New Year arrival, looks to be settling into his place in the team, operating across the midfield. He delivered some excitement with a great free kick on the edge of the box, which was saved well.

The ex-Reading man also hit a swerving cross that had to be tipped over by Hall. Reason joined in the attacking action by slamming a 25-yard shot low at the busy custodian, who palmed out for a corner.



SCORER: James Constable salvaged a point with a late strike.

It was all hunky dory for the Spitfires until Turley, the centre back who returned from a long-term arm injury against Grimsby last month, limped out clutching the back of his left leg as he disappeared into the tunnel for treatment.

Dan Spence came on. It marked the end of the defensive harmony that had seen the home team untroubled for much of the first 35 minutes.

Six minutes later Gray jinked past Evans, now at centre half, creating space in the box for a shot. His right footed effort, his 12th of the season, flew past Flitney's arm.

It sparked Telford into life. With seconds left of the half, Smith missed a sitter from Danny Ventre's long range shot, which rebounded to him just outside the six-yard box.

Eastleigh had lost their momentum, and 12 minutes into the second period things went from bad to worse. In a two-minute flurry United, who have sat bottom of the division since early September but have just won back-to-back away games at Aldershot and Wrexham, snatched a 3-1 lead.

First Farrell stepped up, striking powerfully across goal from the

right. Flitney got a touch but it was hit too hard to be kept out the net.

Then, on 58 minutes, Smith atoned for his earlier miss – making sure from Clancy's parried shot from Flitney, with a thunderbolt into the roof of the net from 12 yards.

Dan Walker and later Deon Burton were introduced for their Eastleigh debuts as Hill searched for a way back into the game.

With 18 minutes left they had their lifeline as Reason's deflected shot in the box off Mike Grogan wrong-footed stopper Hall and nestled in the bottom right.

You couldn't take your eyes off this ridiculous roller-coaster of a game. Eastleigh levelled through Constable as he tapped home in from Ben Strevens' head back across the six yard box from Reason's free kick.

Walker, using his devastating pace, burst through into the box with five minutes left and cut the ball across the face goal. Hall was waiting for it and collected in.

ATT: 1219
Eastleigh: Ross Flitney, Michael Green, James Constable, Jai Reason, Jack Midson (Deon Burton 67), Ben Strevens (c), Will Evans, Brian Howard (Dan Walker 57), Jamie Turley (Dan Spence 35), Joe Partington, Harry Pell. Subs not used: Craig Stanley, Craig McAllister.



GAME CHANGER: Losing Jamie Turley to injury unsettled Eastleigh's defensive harmony.

Winch hit 'em for six

WINCHESTER City put two nightmare Sydenhams Premier defeats behind them to hit Bemerton Heath Harlequins for six at the Denplan City ground this afternoon.

Fast-starting City had successive shots by Zach Glasspool charged down in the fourth minute before Scott Joyce's effort for Bemerton deflected upwards and keeper Gareth Barfoot tipped it over for a corner, writes **WENDY GEE**.

Winchester showed most of the early promise and earned a corner of their own in the seventh minute when Warren Bentley had had the ball nicked off his toes after turning in space inside the area.

Micky Hubbard delivered the kick which the visitors cleared only as far as the edge of a packed penalty area where BENTLEY managed to curl the ball through the eye of a needle to put Winchester in front.

Good work by Geoff Dunn, a bright spark on the left, earned City another left-wing corner on 17 minutes. Again Hubbard took it, delivering to the back stick where Jamie Thoroughgood's header was turned behind for another flag kick but nothing came of it.

Some of Winchester's free-flowing attacking play was a delight to watch and Bemerton dived with death on 20 minutes when they allowed Adam Tomasso's cross bounced dangerously around the six-yard box before Aaron Cook finally knocked it back for keeper Max Frampton to deal with.

Heath responded with a useful strike by Jack

Eaves which was expertly turned away by Barfoot.

But, after the blow of successive league defeats by Whitchurch and Totton & Eling there was a real buzz about Winchester – and Dunn in particular – and it was the ex-Eastleigh youngster who set up their second goal on 26 minutes.

Surging into the area from the left, he skipped past a couple of challenges before squaring for the deadly BENTLEY to slot home.

Winchester then had a penalty appeal turned down for a shove on Tomasso after Bentley had delivered a high ball in from the right.

With two of the opening 45 minutes remaining, Bemerton's former Salisbury City skipper Cook pulled away from his marker to meet Eaves' free kick at the far post, but his header was off target.

Whatever half-time plans Bemerton made went out of the window inside two second-half minutes and Winchester made it 3-0.

Glasspool sent in an inviting free kick from the right and DOM COPE was up from left-back to steer it home from close-range.

City almost profited from another Glasspool delivery, this time from the left, but Bentley headed just over.

The rampant hosts needn't have worried, however, as two goals in three minutes by the livewire DUNN soon had them five goals up.

First the pacy no.11 headed over Frampton after Bentley had picked him out and then he had the simple job of tapping over the line



USING HIS HEAD: The third goal is scored by Winchester's Dominic Cope.

after Frampton could only parry successive shots from Taz Roberts and Tomasso.

Bemerton kept battling, but Joyce had no joy beating Barfoot at his near post in the 73rd minute. Frampton then saved well to deny Bentley his hat-trick after determined play by sub Danilo Cadete on the right before the crossbar came to Bemerton's rescue after another City sub Charlie Smeeton had let fly.

Barfoot denied Jack Slade with his legs and

again got the better of the Heath skipper as they challenged for an awkward high ball.

Cadete then missed a clear chance to make it six in 89th minute, his shot flying wildly over.

But Winchester's half-dozen was completed in stoppage time when Cadete teed-up Bentley.

His shot was pushed away by Frampton and substitute Liam ROBINSON scored with virtually the last kick of the game.

Non-league Football

Non-league News

Poole get Pompey ace Close in on loan

PROMOTION-HUNGRY Poole Town have signed Portsmouth midfielder Ben Close on an initial month-long youth loan.

The 18-year-old has made six first-team appearances for Pompey this season, including three from the subs' bench in SkyBet League Two.

Close has also started every league match for Portsmouth's reserve side so far, including Tuesday's 1-1 draw with their AFC Bournemouth counterparts in the Final Third Development League.

Dolphins boss Tom Killick, who recently borrowed winger Jack Maloney from the Fratton Park outfit, described Close's arrival as "a real coup" for his Southern Premier Division title-chasers.

Backing his new recruit to make an impact at Tatnam, he said: "There had been interest in Ben from clubs at a higher level, but we have developed a good relationship with Portsmouth and that helped in this instance."

"From what I hear about him, I am confident he will make a big impact for us."

"We have pretty much everyone fit at the moment but, with us playing twice a week for the next month, I felt we had to make provision for injuries and suspensions."

"It is much better to plan for difficulties rather than react to them and it is also difficult to turn down a player of Ben's calibre."

"He has a professional pedigree and having first-team games under his belt at his age is rare. I know Portsmouth rate him very highly. "We feel he is likely to make a good contribution and enhance our attacking play."

Cherries striker Joe Quigley, meanwhile, has extended his youth loan with Poole.

With the Dolphins' scheduled game at Arlesey Town frozen off last Saturday, they have been overtaken at the summit by neighbours Weymouth who have had back-to-back home wins over Histon and Chesham.

Poole, though, were just one point adrift going into today's (Saturday's) big Dorset showdown against the Terras with three games in hand.



TOMMY KILICK

Cherries midfielder joins Eastleigh rivals

AFC BOURNEMOUTH coach Stephen Purches believes a loan move to non-League heavyweights Bristol Rovers will be a "great experience" for Josh Wakefield.

The midfielder, a product of the Cherries youth ranks, joined Eastleigh's Vanarama Conference promotion rivals ahead of Monday's transfer deadline.

Rovers are bidding to

make an immediate return to the Football League having dropped out for the first time in their history on the final day of last season.

Wakefield, 21, made four first-team appearances under former Cherries boss Paul Groves in 2012 and also served Welling and Torquay on loan after doing the rounds of the local circuit with New Milton,

Hamworthy, Wimborne and Dorchester.

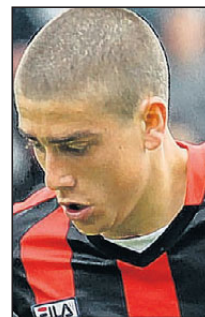
"Josh has been in a rich vein of form and has been working very hard," said Purches. "He has trained with the first team on occasion and done well in our development games."

"Bristol Rovers are a big club with a great fan base and it will be really good experience for him."

"Challenging at the top of

the table brings different pressures and experiences and, hopefully, he will go there and revel in it."

Rovers' former Salisbury City boss Darrell Clarke said: "I'm delighted Josh has agreed to sign for us. He has had an excellent grounding in the game with AFC Bournemouth and has experience of playing Conference football with Torquay United this season."



LOAN MOVE: Josh Wakefield.

CHANGES AT THE TOP AT ROMSEY

Town replace Phillips with Samuels

ROMSEY Town have parted company with head coach James Phillips and promptly appointed Andy Samuels as manager as they look to avoid finishing at the foot of the Wessex League.

After just one win in 15 league games, and with the club at the foot of Sydenhams Division One, Phillips's tenure at the Bypass Ground ended this week following a mutual agreement to finish the young coach's time at the helm.

It took less than 24 hours for Town to select a replacement ahead of their huge game at home to table toppers Tadley Calleva today (3pm).

Clubman Samuels, who has held coaching roles in the Romsey youth sides and first team since arriving in the summer of 2013, is promoted to the management post after assisting Phillips.

Former Eastleigh and Fareham Town man Dave Hazelgrove will be assistant, while Jamie Wiseman remains goal-keeper coach.

Samuels' playing career includes spells with Plymouth Argyle, Bashley and Winchester City and he holds a multitude of coaching qualifications including the FA Level 2 award.

"It was far from a knee jerk reaction or a panic decision," vice-chairman Phil Rowland said.

"James is a terrific guy and a very talented coach."

"The standards and professionalism he instilled were excellent."

"He desperately wanted to stay to try

to reverse the sequence of results, but the committee had to take a view on whether we believed he was still the right person to do that."

"That was based on previous results and (the fact that we're) coming up to a critical part of the season."

"The decision was taken that we felt a change was necessary."

"We, of course, wish James the best as he leaves us and hope that when he looks back at his time with us in the future he'll do so fondly and use the experience gained to further his potential within the game."

"For us now, it's about giving Andy, Dave and Jamie the support and opportunity to do what they need to do to get results."

Phillips, who is looking to get straight back into football, said: "I've left, the decision was made and I'd like to express my disappointment at not being able to see out the season."

"I felt, after signing a couple of players that I wanted, that we were starting to turn a corner."

"I didn't want to leave and obviously I wanted to see out the job."

"We'd targeted the games that can get us out of the problems we have and I felt we were definitely capable of better."

Phillips was promoted from within the club to head coach last summer after the club were relegated from the Sydenhams Premier Division.

He built a squad from scratch and made the headlines in August for becoming the youngest manager in the FA Cup's 143-year history, at 22-years-old.

OUT: James Phillips has left his post as Romsey Town manager.



Non-league Football

PYATT HAILS BULPITT IMPACT

Youngster has been a "revelation" says Lymington manager

JOHN Pyatt says Jamie Bulpitt has been "a revelation" since his arrival at Lymington Town.

Having seen what Bulpitt could do in the Southern League with Bashley last season, Pyatt knew he was getting a good player when he recently signed him from AFC Totton.

But even he has been impressed with the difference Bulpitt has made to his steadily improving Sydenhams Premier Division side, **writes WENDY GEE.**

Bulpitt, 20, was picked up by AFC Bournemouth at the age of 12 and spent four years with the Cherries only to miss out on a scholarship.

After becoming involved at AFC Totton, he worked his way up at Eastleigh where he was on the first-team fringes during their Conference South days.

Spells at Totton & Eling and Bashley followed before he returned to AFC Totton last summer.

"Jamie's been brilliant, a revelation," said Pyatt.

"He's a quiet lad who works hard and lets his football do the talking.

"He can play the holding role in midfield, but he's happy to attack as well.

"Jamie deserves a mention. I can't say enough good things about him."

Lerone 'Rudi' Plummer is the latest new face at Lymington, joining from Sydenhams Premier rivals Whitchurch United.

The pacy frontrunner helps compensate for the departure of Manny Soetan to Vanarama Conference South outfit St Albans City.

Soetan initially moved down to Southampton as a student since when he has played for Team Solent, AFC Totton and Blackfield & Langley.

Explaining his move to Hertfordshire, Pyatt said:

"Manny's girlfriend lives up that way and he's got family around that area too.

"Manny came down here to study, he went to Australia for a bit and then came back.

"He needs to get himself settled now. He's been all over the place, bless him!

"He got some work down here when he was at Blackfield & Langley, but that's dried up and he's moved back to be closer to his family.

"St Albans approached him and, whether he's punching above his weight at that level, only time will tell.

"On his day he's a very good player, but he needs to be more consistent. Good luck to him."

Plummer has also led a somewhat nomadic existence with Eastleigh, QK Southampton, Brockenhurst, Winchester City, Fareham Town and, latterly, Whitchurch.

Pyatt doesn't personally know him, saying: "He knows one of our lads from Eastleigh and just turned up for training one night. We spoke to Whitchurch and he came across."

Wishing Plummer all the best at his new club, Jam Boys boss Carl Bennett said: "I like Rudi as a player, he's got lots of good attributes but, unfortunately, I don't think his head's right to play in a team.

"You need 16 players all in it for each other and not just for themselves."

Plummer made his debut off the bench for Lymo against Totton & Eling last Saturday – and missed a sitter from two yards.

But the New Forest hosts held out for a 1-0 victory over the win-less Wessex basement boys after James Davis had struck early on.



QUICK TO IMPRESS:
Jamie Bulpitt.

Non-league News

Vaughan to bring in new faces

BOURNEMOUTH Poppies boss Ken Vaughan vowed to bring in reinforcements in the wake of the club's heaviest ever home defeat in the Sydenhams Premier Division.

Poppies were torn apart 8-0 by championship-chasing Petersfield Town who showed them no mercy as Andy Todd (3), Warren Hunt (2), Ed Dryden, Benny Read and Ashley Howes piled on the punishment at Victoria Park.

Bournemouth's recent signing Shima Ami from Blackfield & Langley was dismissed in the second half, but the game was well beyond them by then with fast-starting Petersfield having scored three in the opening ten minutes.

Vaughan, pictured right, cited the absence of four senior players as a factor in the humiliating defeat but offered up "no excuses" for the collapse.

"Our biggest problem is getting the same side out every week," said the boss, who has used 53 players so far this term and added two more this week in the shape of Carl Foster from divisional rivals Verwood Town and goalkeeper Dan Carr.

"We need to find some new players, key people who are prepared to play week in, week out," Vaughan added, warning: "The disruption has cost us too many times and, if we don't sort ourselves out, we will find ourselves battling relegation."

Todd's hat-trick was the fifth scored against Bournemouth's leaky defence this season.

Reflecting on the landslide victory, Petersfield boss Ian Saunders said: "We didn't look back after making a flying start. We controlled the tempo and the game was over as a contest by half-time. It was a decent day at the office."



Cup draw is a good one for Cherries – Diaper



DAVE Diaper couldn't help but smile about Sholing's Hampshire FA Senior Cup semi-final draw, admitting: "It's a good one for AFC Bournemouth!"

The Boatmen – the lowest-ranked side left in the competition – have landed arguably the toughest possible tie away at Dean Court in the last four.

The other semi is an all-Vanarama Conference South clash, which pits Alex Pike's Gosport Borough away to Farnborough.

While SkyBet Championship leaders Bournemouth use development squad players in the county cup, it is still a tall order for Sholing, who sit 17th in the Evo-Stik Southern One South & West.

Asked his reaction to the draw, Diaper, pictured left, whose company BSA Regal Group sponsor the competition, laughed: "It's a good one for Bournemouth. I should think they'll be very pleased!

"But with everything that's happened this season, we've done well

to get to the semi-final. I can't remember too many seasons when we haven't made the latter stages."

Both teams came through testing quarter-finals against Sydenhams Premier opposition. Sholing eventually knocked out Lymington Town in a penalty shoot-out, while Bournemouth's young guns trailed to a Gary Austin strike at Hordean before roaring back for a 3-1 win.

Ex-Christchurch winger Harry Cornick lived up to his captain's role for the Cherries, scoring two

and making one to lead the side to victory.

"Realistically it's going to be tough for us," said Diaper. "Harry Cornick played against us when he was with Christchurch. He's a quality player and they've got three or four others on the verge of the first team."

The AFC Bournemouth v Sholing tie is scheduled for Wednesday, March 11, a week after the Farnborough v Gosport showdown on Tuesday, March 3.

Non-league Football



Non-league News

Fareham ace battles back

FAREHAM Town have received heartening news to help them through their Sydenhams Premier relegation fight.

Young defender Matt Page, who suffered a freak, but potentially life-changing, kidney injury against Fawley AFC in September, is on his way back.

Page was bedridden for weeks after suffering a stage four severe tear and rupture to his left kidney during Town's 2-0 FA Vase win over the Oilers.

Bucket collections were held to help the student make ends meet while he recovered.

Thankfully, Page is now back on his feet and took his first steps towards a first-team comeback by playing just under an hour for the reserves in their 3-1 victory at Alton Town.

"Not only did he return to the field for the first time, but he scored too, showing adept touches with his feet when the ball fell kindly to him," said a club spokesman.

Page's recovery will be welcome news for Fawley too.

Such was the Oilers' concern for the stricken defender that the players donated the proceeds of their 'football card' fund-raiser to support him and sent a cheque for £50 to Cams Alders.

Chairman to stand down

THE chairman of high-flying Amesbury Town says it will be a "sad day" when he resigns from the club he has served for 15 years.

Jason Cameron has announced his impending departure from the Bonnymead Park post due to family commitments.

During his time at the Wiltshire club, which is gunning for promotion from Sydenhams One, the 42-year-old has spent five years as treasurer, more than three years on the committee and the last six as chairman.

"It may seem very strange when you look at our current position, but the work carried out behind the scenes is enormous and I feel it is time for me to step aside, but I will always help whoever takes over," said the MOD worker.

Cameron has worked with ten managers and, after sacking nine, he came across current boss Gareth Horner whom he rates as the best he has worked with.

When Cameron steps down in May, the secretary, treasurer and vice-chairman Spencer Mulholland will be leaving as well.

"Amesbury is financially secure and is an excellent family club," said Cameron. "Next year, if we get promoted, which I think we definitely will, the committee needs to double in size."

Amesbury, founded in 1904, are seeking a new chairman.

Anyone interested should contact Cameron on 07733 087468 or at jasoncameron16@hotmail.com

Basingstoke floor leaders Boreham

MANAGER Jason Bristow wants opposition sides to "fear" Basingstoke Town as they push for a place in the Vanarama Conference South promotion shake-up.

Town roared to a Chris Flood-inspired 4-0 win at leaders Boreham Wood last Saturday and went into today's home match against Maidenhead sitting fourth in the table, six points off top spot with two games in hand.

February offers up a run of winnable fixtures, with Basingstoke playing five games against sides currently outside the top ten.

Bristow, right, is aware Stoke have sometimes struggled against teams lower down the table and admits the next month will have a big bearing on their title challenge.

"If you look at previous winners of this league, they always won games like the ones we have coming up," he said. "We need to make sure teams come here and fear us by putting in performances and winning games."

"On paper, it's a really good month, but in the past we've come unstuck in these sort of games. We need to focus on ourselves. If we

play the way we know we can, we should be able to have a good month and really put ourselves in contention."

Former Dorchester, Eastleigh and Winchester City striker Flood helped himself to a hat-trick as Basingstoke stunned table-

topping Boreham Wood with a runaway victory in Hertfordshire.

After a prolific start to the season, Flood went into the game having scored just once in the last eight outings. But he repaid

Bristow's faith with interest to take his season's goal tally to 17 in 34 games.

Town took the lead against the run of play when Liam Enver-Marum squared for the unmarked Flood to bury a 21st-minute opener.

Two goals in the space of four minutes then put the visitors in complete control going into half-time.

An excellent Shaun McAuley pass set up Enver-Marum to beat 'keeper James Russell at the second attempt, before Flood buried a 25-yard free-kick.

Town defended well to prevent the hosts finding a route back into the game and

looked dangerous on the break.

Flood struck again just after the hour, beating a defender on the left and skipping around Russell to calmly complete his hat-trick.

It capped an unhappy Wood 'debut' for former Eastleigh skipper Daryl McMahon, who has just returned to Meadow Park from Ebbsfleet United.

The Irishman was preferred to another ex-Spittire, Graeme Montgomery, in the starting line-up.

● Basingstoke's former Eastleigh and Gosport midfielder Jamie Brown was due to undergo a groin operation this week.



Bright new future ahead for Magpies

WIMBORNE Town have unveiled plans for a new ground.

Magpies' prospective home includes a main pitch, training pitch and multi-use games area as part of a plush, modern development next to Leigh Road in Wimborne.

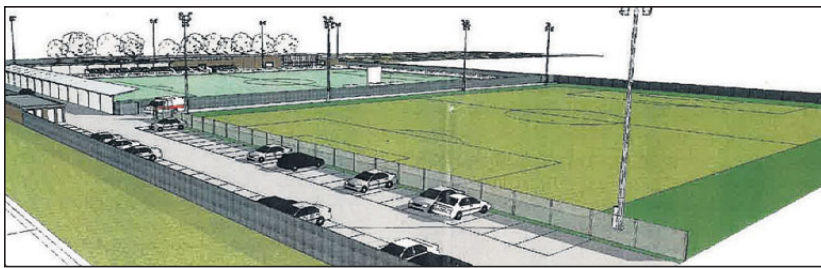
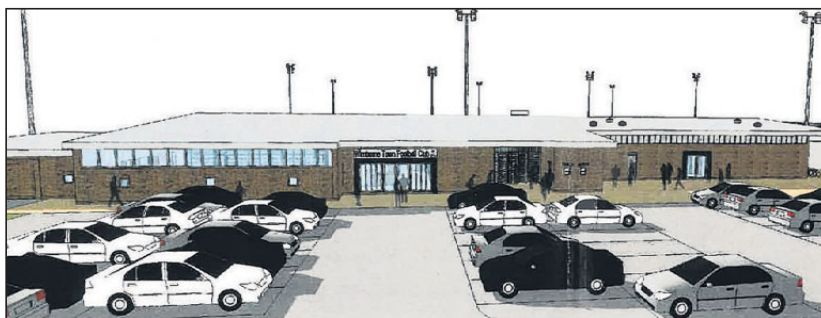
The Southern One South & West outfit hope to move to the new site, around two miles from Cuthbury, as early as 2016/17.

The stadium will be constructed at the cost of Wyatt Homes, who plan to build housing on Wimborne's current premises.

"This ground fits in with everything we are trying to do," said Magpies chairperson Paula Henley. "They will be fantastic facilities and there is an awful lot of potential."

"Given that the new ground has to be constructed by Wyatt Homes at their cost, we are in such a good position."

"I don't think something like this happens to many clubs and at Wimborne we don't get an awful lot, so



ARTIST'S IMPRESSION: Plans for Wimborne Town's new ground have been unveiled.

it's nice for us."

Shortly after Henley took over in September, she set a target of 'Conference football in three to five years.

Welcoming news of the new stadium, team boss Steve Cuss said: "The big thing is that it will allow us to go to Southern Prem

standard and it could be developed so we could go into the Conference South.

"We are able to put more seats in and more covered

standing in, so everything is geared up for a higher level of football.

"We want to attract the good non-League players and when new grounds come along, players are keen to play at those grounds."

"This stadium will be great to help us attract players because it will be a great place to play football."

● Wimborne skipper Scott Arnold praised Luke Stone after the Dorset Premier League hotshot made his debut off the bench in Tuesday's 1-1 draw at Bridgwater.

The dual-registered frontman, who plays for DPL leaders Merley on Saturdays, had a hand in Sam Griffin's second-half equaliser.

"Luke looked really bright," said Arnold. "Considering he stepped up all those leagues, he did brilliantly. You could see he was used to scoring goals and had a lot of confidence. He's a stocky little lad, but was holding off six-foot centre-halves."

Non-league Football

Eastleigh snap up World Cup star

RICHARD Hill says Eastleigh fans should be "pinching themselves" at the calibre of player coming into the club.

In a week that has seen Jamaican World Cup star Deon Burton become the latest recruit at the Silverlake, he says Spitfires supporters have never had it so good.

Burton is the fifth new Spitfire to wing his way in since the turn of the year, following Brian Howard, Harry Pell and loanees Joe Partington and Dan Walker in Eastleigh's pedigree Vanarama Conference stable.

And, Hill says, it's a mark of the club's growing stature in the game that Football League players are suddenly open to the possibility of a move to Stoneham Lane.

"I said all along I'd like a squad of 20 players but I couldn't get all 20 of the calibre I wanted before the August deadline and I wasn't going to sign people for the sake of it," said Hill.

"When we were losing against Grimsby my only choice was to put on Macca (Craig McAllister) and Yemi (Odubade, now on loan at Woking), but I've got more options now. It's taken until this point of the season to get them, but people know who we are now and they want to play for Eastleigh.

"When I was putting the squad together during the summer players wouldn't come here because we were new to this league and no one took us seriously. All they wanted to talk about was how much money we had.

"Now we've had nearly a year in the Conference, we're at the right end of the table and we're competitive, you wouldn't believe the calibre of player agents are calling me with.

"There are southern-based players playing in the north of England for Football League clubs

who see Eastleigh as an opportunity to move back down south.

"Before, Southampton, Bournemouth and Portsmouth were their only options, but now they're looking at Eastleigh

as an opportunity to play a decent level of football back down here.

"That's a big feather in our cap and Eastleigh fans should be pinching themselves about the players we're getting here.

"One of our fans came up to me the other day and said that in all his time supporting Eastleigh he never thought he'd see the day when Brian Howard, Deon Burton and Harry Pell were playing for the club."

Discussing the build-up to Burton's arrival, Hill said: "I had a phone call a couple of weeks ago from someone I knew who said he might be available. I said to keep me posted and the call actually came to us saying he had a few loose ends to tie up at Scunthorpe but he was interested in coming to us.

"Let's be honest, if someone rings you and tells you Deon could be available and he'd like to play for Eastleigh, you're not actually going to say 'no', are you?"

At 38, former Jamaica, Derby and Portsmouth striker Burton is in the twilight of his career, but Hill said: "He's still in good shape and he's obviously looked after his body during a very, very good career.

"Of course I'd like to sign

Joma

krbs

SIGNING: Former Pompey ace Deon Burton has joined Eastleigh.

that the combined wages of the five players brought in amount to less than the four players who have recently departed either permanently or on loan.

Hill, though, insists that no one was pushed out the door.

"I don't have a

a
28 -
year-old
Deon

bad word to say about Jamie Collins, Ben Wright, Stuart Fleetwood or Yemi," said Hill. "They did great for us and they could all still be at the club if they wanted to be."

Burton, but he'd probably be earning a hundred grand a week in the Premier League!"

Hill's January/February dealings represent good business for Eastleigh. Word is

Spitfires to open new stand on TV date

EASTLEIGH will officially open their new 2,300-seater stand with TV cameras present.

The Spitfires will unveil the Marks Mackoy's Community Stand, behind the far end goal, for the Macclesfield Town game on Saturday, February 28, which is being screened live on

BT Sport (12.45pm kick-off) as part of their Vanarama Conference coverage.

With the new community sponsor, Compass Vehicle Leasing, having already purchased 1,500 tickets for the game, the Spitfires are hoping for a record attendance.

Eastleigh drew in

2,621 fans for their clash against Bristol Rovers in September - their best ever home league game.

CVL will be making the tickets available to community groups, local sports teams, schools etc. free of charge.

"This is a wonderful gesture by our new sponsor and we are

hopeful that this will help make the opening of the stand a memorable occasion," said a club spokesman. "We have already been contacted by a number of clubs and schools who have taken advantage of the offer of free tickets.

"Anyone who would

like to attend the game should contact the club at the earliest opportunity as it is likely that these tickets will have all been allocated well in advance of the match."

Eastleigh's new stand, which has been unofficially open since December, takes the capacity of the

Stoneham Lane ground beyond 5,000.

To book tickets speak to Kenny or Sarah on 023 8061 3361 or email kamor@eastleighfc.com or snewton@eastleighfc.com

Tickets will be allocated on a first come first served basis and will need to be collected by February 14.

Non-league News

Mark makes a big impact

NICK Crittenden has praised Dorchester Town player-boss Mark Jermyn for the impact he is having out on the pitch.

The Magpies won for the third time in four league matches on Tuesday, beating Arlesey Town 3-1 to ease their Southern Premier Division relegation fears.

It was Jermyn's first game back at The Avenue since returning from Poole Town to succeed Graham Kemp at the Dorchester helm.

And his assistant Crittenden believes the upturn in results stems from Jermyn's qualities as a player.

"Everyone goes on about Mark as a manager, but as a player he has given us stability at the back," said the Magpies No.2.

"He is an organiser and he gets people around him. He doesn't let them switch off for a second.

"You can see out on the pitch that we look so much more solid and other teams aren't getting as many chances against us as they were."

Neighbours Weymouth returned to pole position with a 2-1 midweek home win over Chesham.

First-half goals from Adam Kelly and skipper Stewart Yetton ensured Jason Matthews' men leapfrogged Poole Town to hit top spot ahead of today's (Saturday's) big showdown against the Dolphins at Tatnam.

Odam on the move again

FORMER AFC Totton youth striker Jack Odam is on the move again.

The former England Colleges international has left Dorchester Town and joined their Evo-Stik Southern Premier rivals Chippenham on dual registration from Gosport Borough.

Odam, who captained Bashley in the Southern Premier Division last season, joined Gosport during the summer.

But after finding first-team opportunities limited with Alex Pike's Conference South side, he was signed on loan by then Dorchester boss Graham Kemp in October and went on to score five times for the Magpies.

Announcing his departure on twitter, Odam - a prolific scorer with Totton's under-18s - wrote: "Would like to say thank you to all involved with Dorchester Town, a great club with great fans!! I will be signing for Chippenham Town."

Odam made a fleeting appearance as a substitute for his new club last Saturday, going on for the last three minutes of the Bluebirds' 1-0 home success over Dunstable Town.

Ex-Eastleigh striker Ashan Holgan fired in the second-half winner, sealing Chippenham's fifth victory in a month.

Odam got a longer run-out off the bench on Tuesday in a 1-1 draw with Biggleswade Town.

Non-league Football

Non-league News

Boro boss Pike keen on Shots switch

GOSPORT Borough boss Alex Pike has revealed an interest in the vacant manager's job at Aldershot Town.

Pike, pictured below, said he was encouraged to make an application by a representative of the Vanarama Conference Premier club and has subsequently done so.

"I was asked to put my CV in and I have done that," he confirmed earlier this week.

"I am extremely happy where I am, but it's all about ambition."

Pike, though, faces stiff competition in the race to succeed Andy Scott, who was dismissed from the Aldershot post two weeks ago.

It is understood that more than 100 applicants are after the job, which is currently in the caretaker hands of club captain Chris Barker, assisted by ex-Eastleigh coach Matt Gray.

Meanwhile, Totton-based goalkeeping coach Wayne Shaw has left Gosport to link up again with his old



Eastleigh bosses Paul Doswell and Ian Baird at Sutton United.

Shaw previously spent five years at Sutton but was released following an altercation with Kingstonian fans, who had verbally abused him, in December 2013.

Ex-Sholing marksman Lee Wort struck twice and Paco Saez once as Gosport outgunned Bashley 3-0 in the Russell Cotes Cup second round on Tuesday.

Wort netted his first two minutes before the break from Rory Williams' assist.

And it got worse Bash when, with the half-time whistle approaching, Wort's shot hit Saez who knew little about it as the ball ricocheted past the wrong-footed 'keeper into the empty net.

The Spaniard returned the compliment on 65 minutes, threading a pass through to the St Mary's-based marksman who calmly beat Callum Maher in the Bashley goal.

Gosport now host Blackfield & Langley - managed by former Borough boss John Robson - in the quarter-finals.

Pat's praise for Fareham stopper

PAT McManus reckons goalkeeper Luke Douglas could save lowly Fareham Town from the jaws of relegation.

Although McManus's Brockenhurst did second-to-bottom Town no favours, coming back from

a goal down to beat them 2-1 at Grigg Lane last week, Douglas impressed with his show of resistance.

"Fareham's goalkeeper had a good game and he might be the difference between them going down

and staying up," said McManus.

"We conceded quite early on following a defensive mix-up and Fareham were much better than the side we drew with (2-2) back in September. Once they'd

scored they were scrapping for everything and they made life difficult for us.

"They got a second-half penalty and the save by Vinny (Brock keeper Vinicius Marques de Salve) made a difference."

Fareham had banked seven out of nine points prior to their trip to Grigg Lane and manager Matt Parr remained encouraged, despite defeat.

"It was another excellent performance which we'll

take a lot of positives from," he said. "We can take a lot of heart from the way we played."

Fareham have recruited young forward Ryan Coker, previously with Petersfield Town and US Portsmouth.

Brock's stars are in demand at Bashley

Wendy Gee

wendy.gee@dailyecho.co.uk

NON-LEAGUE REPORTER

BROCKENHURST have successfully fended off yet another attempted raid on their playing squad.

When long-serving former boss John Pyatt's departed for Bashley last season, a handful of his charges - Scott Joyce and Dave Marden among them - followed him to Bashley Road.

Since then the Badgers have been hit with a succession of seven-dayers from various clubs, the latest being another from Southern One South & West basement boys Bashley for wideman Will Tickle.

But like Mark Barker, Tom Hill and Jacques Bernard before him, ex-Team Solent man Tickle has decided the grass is greener at Grigg Lane.

"I texted Will when the approach came in from Bashley and he didn't even want to speak to them," reported Brock boss Pat McManus.

"We've had a lot of approaches for our players this season and apart from a couple who weren't getting in the side - Dan Maher who went to Bashley and Nathan Goodger who went to Totton & Eling - all of them have stayed, so something's working. Hopefully it bodes well for the future."

McManus, though, has politely requested that, in future, Bashley look elsewhere.

He said: "After the approach came in for Will, I emailed our secretary Colin Bell, who used to be at Bashley, and asked if he could politely point them in the direction of other clubs. There are plenty of clubs around, but they're always coming in for our players and



APPROACH: Bashley want to sign Brock winger Will Tickle.

enough's enough. He got a message back from Mike Cranidge, the Bashley secretary, saying: 'Only doing my job, Colin. Keep smiling!'"

Brock were thankful for a second-half penalty save by dual-signed Poole Town Brazilian goalkeeper 'Vinny' Marques de Salve as they overcame lowly Fareham Town 2-1

at Grigg Lane last weekend.

After being stunned by Sam Kirkwood's eighth-minute blow, Brock equalised on 27 minutes when Harry Jeffries' free-kick was flicked on by Martin Warren for Hill to bury.

Fareham threatened to take the lead again when a penalty was awarded for Bernard's foul, but

Marques de Salve denied Ian Humble from the spot.

That gave the Badgers fresh impetus and they won the game with five minutes remaining when substitute Jamie Betteridge applied the finishing touch after Jeffries had headed Brad Magookin's corner into the danger zone.

Marques de Salve originally joined the Grigg Lane outfit to cover for Sam Cousins' suspension, but with Cousins currently unavailable for health reasons, the Brazilian is staying for the rest of the Sydenhams Premier campaign.

"I think Poole have plans for Vinny next season, but we've got him for the rest of this one," said McManus.

"We've also got Rory Anderson and Lee Webber dual-registered from Sholing, so hopefully we won't get left in the lurch without a 'keeper."

"Vinny's a great lad, but his English is not that good yet. He spends all his time laughing and saying 'yes', but he makes some great saves. We're unbeaten since he came into the side."

The same goes for Martin Warren, but Brock's recently acquired targetman won't be around too much this month.

"Martin's working away for two weeks and then he's got a holiday that he'd booked before we signed him," McManus explained. "It's possible, though, that we'll have him for the midweek games against Newport and Horndean."

"We'll be fine. We've got Jamie Betteridge, who's done well whenever we've asked him to, and Braiden Hamilton's coming back to fitness."

Marques de Salve now has another Brazilian to talk to in the Brock dressing room. The Badgers have signed 19-year-old winger Bruno Periera, who recently scored on his debut for Poole Town's under-21s.

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Non-league Football



TITLE CHASERS: Petersfield Town in action recently against Blackfield & Langley.

Non-league News

'A reality check' was necessary for Stags

STEVE Riley says his AFC Totton players shouldn't beat themselves up about blotting their 2015 copybook at the sixth time of asking.

After kicking off the new year with five excellent Southern One South & West wins against Fleet, Didcot, Bashley, Wimborne and Wantage, the Stags were stopped in their tracks last Saturday at Larkhall Athletic.

Totton lost the game 2-0, punished for a couple of defensive failings, but Riley can accept that as long as the players learn from their mistakes.

He said: "The reality check is that we've got five wins out of six this year, so let's keep our heads up and try and go on another winning run."

"Everyone put in a good shift at Larkhall, but we've got to make sure that when we get into those situations defensively we deal with them better."

"The first goal was a fortunate one for them. There was a bit of ping-pong, we didn't deal with the situation and, as the ball's bounced on the edge of the box, it's fallen to their player



who's nicked it past our keeper Steve Mowthorpe.

"The second one I was disappointed with. There was a ball over the top which Mowry or Stuart Mott should have dealt with, but the lad's got in between and had a simple tap-in."

"It's disappointing, but it happens. Football has a habit of doing that to you."

"Players are human beings and you have to deal with it and make sure you get it right next time."

Giving credit to the opposition, Riley, pictured above, added: "Larkhall are a strong, physical, well organised side who are good at what they do."

"We were well on top first half and hit the woodwork a couple of times, but we didn't capitalise on our chances and once Larkhall went ahead they were always going to be difficult to break down."

"Although the game got stretched, they stayed solid defensively."

"We were never going to give up the ghost, but we just couldn't get a goal."

"Sherbs (Nathaniel Sherborne) made a great run and his shot clipped the bar."

"Had that one gone in, there would have been a grandstand finish, but it wasn't to be."

"Fair play to Larkhall, they capitalised on a fortunate first goal and an error from us."

FIELD'S TITLE CHARGE LOOKS THE REAL DEAL

Wendy Gee

wendy.gee@dailyecho.co.uk

NON-LEAGUE REPORTER

THE longer the season goes on, the more credible it becomes that Petersfield Town can add the Sydenhams Premier title to the Division One crown they claimed last year.

Even the sending-off of striker Warren Hunt, pictured right, could not prevent the Rams charging their way back to the summit with a 4-0 win over third-placed Whitchurch United on Tuesday.

Petersfield led 1-0 at the break after Ash Howes had polished off a well-worked 25th-minute attack.

Both teams had their chances before a controversial 55th-minute incident threatened to knock the high-flying hosts off course.

Former Sholing and Moneyfields striker Hunt chased down a back pass and, although he appeared to get to the ball first, his momentum took him into United 'keeper Brad Snelling and he was given his marching orders for dangerous play.

But far from deflating Petersfield, it only served to inspire the ten men as they floored Whitchurch with three crushing blows in 12 minutes.

First Dan Woodford crossed for Danny Thompson to double the lead on 70 minutes and then the dual-signed Gosport Borough man

scored himself, cracking home a low shot from the edge of the area.

Royal Navy man Andy 'Sweeney' Todd – scorer of a hat-trick in Saturday's 8-0 slaying of Bournemouth Poppies – had the final say, calmly rounding Snelling before depositing the ball into the empty net.

Victory lifted Petersfield three points above neighbours Moneyfields and, with Winchester City and Blackfield & Langley both faltering, it is fast developing into a Portsmouth area title fight.

Whitchurch are still in with a shout, seven points off title pace.

But, speaking before the Petersfield game, Jam Boys boss Carl Bennett

preached caution, saying: "We don't want to get carried away."

"We'll start thinking about it if we keep getting results, but I'm trying to keep the players' minds off it."

While Winchester have suffered damaging back-to-back defeats against

Whitchurch and rock-bottom Totton & Eling this week, Blackfield shot themselves in the foot with what manager John Robson branded an "awful" performance at home to Horndean last Saturday.

The Watersiders were sunk 2-1 by Dave Carter's Deans, leaving Robson to conclude: "We would have to go on a run of not losing from now until the end of the season to be in with a shout of the title, but the sides above and around us look more likely to be winning games."

Robson, who lives in the

who plays for Petersfield Town. When I asked him 'How did you go?' he said 'We won 8-0, John' and I thought 'Yeah, that's what I should have been saying to him.'

"But we were absolutely awful against Horndean and deserved what we got – nothing."

"I can't think of one outfield player who stepped it up."

"There's no excuse when people put the shirt on and don't give it their all. We didn't look like scoring."

Petersfield, in contrast, have banged in 12 goals in their last two games and Bournemouth Poppies boss Ken Vaughan – whose side took the brunt of the punishment – described the Rams' title credentials as "outstanding".

Having masterminded Totton & Eling's shock 1-0 win over Winchester on Tuesday – the Millers' first league triumph for ten long months – chairman/co-manager Andy Tipp concluded: "The title has got to be Petersfield's to lose now."

"Warren Hunt's a big player for them and they've got a few others who are quick and can hit you on the break."

"Winchester have got some very good players, but they don't seem to have anyone to settle them down and keep them calm."

"They're a bit gung-ho and they'll either win 6-0 or they'll lose."

"People watching the other night wouldn't have known which side was going for the title and which one hadn't won all season."



Petersfield area, added: "I went out to get a paper last weekend and bumped into Alex Lowley

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Non-league Football

ADVANCE FIXTURES for the week ahead

Sunday, Feb 8

AFRICAN NATIONS CUP

Final: Ivory Coast v Ghana

BARCLAYS PREMIER LEAGUE

Burnley v West Brom, Newcastle v Stoke, West Ham v Man Utd.

CITY OF SOUTHAMPTON SUNDAY LEAGUE

Hampshire Junior A Cup, quarter-final: Boyatt Wood Wanderers v Village Home, Hamble Roll Call Res v Wickham Dynamos.

Senior Division: AFC Bursledon v AFC West End, KRL v Hamble Roll Call, Sholing United v Bush Hill & Newton Heath 1977, Yacht Tavern v Cricketers Arms (Fair Oak).

Junior 1: AFC Portswood v Sky Blues, AFC Riverside v RS Ocean Village, Glen v Chartwell Green, Ice House v Titans, Landguard Rovers v Chamberlayne Athletic.

Junior 2: LH Galaxy v Athletic Tin Hut, S & D v Itchen Saints, Testlands v Phoenix AFC.

Junior 3: AFC Velmore v Chartwell Green Res, Trant v AFC Bishopstoke, Young Boys 93/4 v Fleming Sports.

Junior 4: Carnival UK v Royale Marine, Durely v Holbury United, Marchwood Rangers v Eastpoint, Otter Sunday v AFC Southbrook, Shelfside v King George.

Junior 5: Burridge AFC v Curbridge, Dorchester Ars v Portswood United, Itchen Albion v Southampton Sea Hawks, Sholing Monks v Portside, St Minions v Bitterne Ducks.

Junior 6: AFC Phoenix v Mottisfont, AFC Spitfire v Netley Royals, Fawley RBL v Sporting Compass, JSC v Bannister Park, Unity v Hunters INN.

Junior 7: AFC Bishopstoke Res v Dorchester Manor, Chamberlayne Athletic Res v Testwood Tornadoes, Lyndhurst JFC v Woodside, Portswood United Res v AFC Carnival.

GOSPORT, FAREHAM & SOLENT LEAGUE

Hampshire Intermediate Cup: CJ Glass v Mucky Duck.

Hampshire Junior A Cup, quarter-final: Boyatt Wood Wanderers v Village Home, FILO v Lee CC. Fareham Town Supporters Cup, second round: Wispers v Village Home Res, Testcombe Town v Daedalus.

Gosport Borough Supporters Cup, second round: Green Dragon v AFC Alverstoke, Hoeford United v Solent Town, Heathfield Royals v Crofton Saints, AFC Gosport v Whiteley, Queens Head United v East Lodge.

Division One: Bridgemary Eagles v CMS.

Division Two: Go Bowling v Down End.

Division 3: AFC Seaway v TML, Fighting cocks v Gosport Wanderers, Stubbington v Bridgemary Colts, Castle in the Air v Dryden.

Division 4: AFC Whiteley v Whiteley XI, Duke of Connaught's Foresters United, Queens Head Raiders v AFC Gosport town.

Division 5: AFC Dynamo v Gipsy Queen, AFC Whiteley Res v AFC Onecom, RVT v Wallington Athletic, White Hart v Borough Town.

WINCHESTER & DISTRICT LEAGUE

Hampshire Intermediate Cup, quarter-final: Baffins Milton Rovers v FC Exchange, CJ Glass v Mucky Duck.

Hampshire Junior A Cup: FILO v Lee Community Centre.

Premier Division: South Winston Swifts v Halfway United.

Division 1: AFC Allbrook v AFC Corinthians, Hedge End Hawks v AFC Stoneham, Winchester County v Owslebury.

Division 2: worthys v FC Railway, King Alfred v FILO Res.

HAMPSHIRE YOUTH LEAGUE

Division 1: AFC Stoneham v Colden Common, AFC Totton v Christchurch, United Services v Petersfield Town, Wimborne Town v Moneyfields.

Division 2: AFC Portchester v United Services, Gosport Borough v Fareham town, PTJ v BTC Southampton, Totton & Eling v New Milton.

Division 3: Christchurch Sports v Ringwood town, Gosport Falcons v Winchester Castle, Gosport Youth v Sway.

SOUTHAMPTON TYRO LEAGUE

U11s

Division 1 East: Colden Common Rovers v Soccer4all Tigers, Hedge End Blue v Sholing Red, Winchester Black v Sholing White.

Division 2 East: bitterne Red v Botley Village Rhinos, Colden Common Rangers v Warsash Wasps Black, Winchester Blue v Sarisbury Sparks, Wyvern Dragons v Alrexford Town.

Division 3 East: Botley Village Tigers v St Francis Knights, Hedge End Rangers Red v Townhill Lingland, Warsash Wasps White v St Francis Rangers, Wyvern Sharks v Hedge End Rangers White.

Division 1 West: marchwood Rajgers v Pace Cougars, Oakwood Dynamos v Oakwood Lions, Romsey Town Cougars v Oakwood Ravens.

Southbrook Rangers v AFC Hittingbury Hurricanes.

Division 2 West: AFC Stoneham v Pace Panthers, Baddesley Park Knights v Ice Sports, Fawley Falcons v AFC Hittingbury Harriers, QK Southampton v Pace Pumas.

Division 3 West: Lakewood Leopards v Wellow Wasps, Oakwood Rangers v Romsey Panthers, Winsor United Green v Baddesley Park Templars, Winsor United Red v AFC Hittingbury Hawks.

U12s

Southampton Tyro Challenge Cup, semi-final: Baddesley Park v Littleton Lions, Winchester Black v AFC Hittingbury Hawks.

Tommy Traynor Trophy, semi-final: Hedge End Rangers White v Colden Common Rangers, St Francis Knights v AFC Stoneham.

Division 1: Oakwood Terriers v Sholing.

Division 2: BTC Southampton v Stoke Park Rangers Red, Colden Common Rovers v oakwood Harriers, Eastleigh v Deportivo Boca.

Division 3: Salisbury City v Winsor United.

Division 4: Bitterne Black v Oakwood Pumas.

Continued on facing page...

EASTLEIGH ACE IS

APRIL 5th 2008. Four days after Joe Partington had celebrated his 18th birthday and the rookie AFC Bournemouth midfielder was living his dream.

An 87th minute replacement for Darren Anderton in a crucial League One match at Roberto Martinez's Swansea City, Partington promptly scored his side's equaliser before his teammate Jo Kuffour struck to cap a stunning comeback win.

That victory wouldn't be enough to save the Cherries from the drop.

The ten point penalty incurred by the club during for entering administration during that 2007/2008 campaign eventually cost them their place in the division – a division that Swansea would win.

Nevertheless, young Partington, who had made his first-team bow from the bench late in a win at Luton Town in February 2008, was making his mark.

That goalscoring knack was further in evidence when the midfielder was given his full-debut in December 2008, for a Bournemouth team by then playing its football under the burden of a 17-point penalty (for failing to meet the League's terms for exiting administration) and fighting for its existence at the foot of the Football League.

No matter.

The teenager, who side-footed home a Matt Tubbs pass on his first start at Dean Court was just thriving on playing football.

Now on loan at Eastleigh, a deal that was originally slated to last a month after his new year arrival but which has now been extended until the season's conclusion, Partington agrees that his parent club's former troubles were a blessing for a footballer tender in years and desperate to make his way in the game.

"It was a good place to be as a young lad," he recalled.

"These days, there are youth teams, under-21 teams, there are a lot of stages (of development) before you hit the first-team, unless you're especially good at a young age and they want to push you through quickly.

"When I was at Bournemouth, with their money problems and with them not being able to sign players, it was more or less all

EASTLEIGH SWITCH: Joe Partington in action for parent club Bournemouth and, inset, celebrating netting for Cherries.

youth team players making up the bench.

"It was positive for me that I was involved at such a young age.

"It makes you learn quickly. "These days, there are lads who are 20 years old and still playing under-21 football.

"It takes them longer to get into a first-team than it did me.

"That happened almost through default, but it was a positive at the time and has stood me in good stead through my career."

A positive time, indeed, but subsequent injuries, managerial flux

at Bournemouth and that club's incredible

MORE EASTLEIGH NEWS ONLINE: dailyecho.co.uk

Non-league Football

NO ORDINARY JOE



upturn in fortunes have all contrived to check Partington's progress since his breakthrough year.

Jimmy Quinn was the man responsible for handing the Portsmouth-born player his first Cherries starting jersey in December 2008, but 11 days later the Northern Irishman was gone.

Eddie Howe took charge and set about engineering one of the more remarkable footballing escape acts in history, making light of that stringent points' penalty on course to rescuing Bournemouth's league status – and so penning the first chapter in what is turning into a successful managerial story.

It was Howe's return in late 2012 for his second spell at the Bournemouth helm that led to

midfielder Partington's conversion into a central defender.

"When Eddie came back in, he saw me (playing) in a different position.

"I was playing in midfield but he wanted me to do something in defence. That was great. I was happy to do that.

"We spent a lot of time working on that sort of stuff, but then I broke my leg in training and spent almost a year out with that."

Explaining his decision early in 2013 to move Partington further back on the pitch, Howe – himself a cultured centre-half during his own playing days – spoke glowingly about his young charge.

"Joe is someone we have always enjoyed working with," the manager remarked. "First

and foremost, he has an excellent appetite and attitude for the game.

"He is a very conscientious worker and a really valued member of the squad."

With performers of the calibre of Harry Arter, Shaun MacDonald and Eunan O'Kane – all now featuring regularly for the Cherries side that sits at the summit of the Championship – already in his ranks, Howe alluded to his squad's "strength in depth" in central midfield areas.

Then he expanded on the qualities that would enable Partington to apply his skills elsewhere.

"We had a look at his (Partington's) position and felt he had all the attributes to be a centre-half so have done a lot of

work behind the scenes in trying to develop his game. He is a versatile performer and can play a lot of different positions."

Partington concedes that such praise – and Howe's overt confidence in him – is well received.

"It was definitely a positive. He said nice things about how he saw me as a football player.

"The way they play football at Bournemouth is out from defence.

"All the defenders there have got great ability on the ball.

"I saw it (the positional change) as a positive and tried to do as much as I could to convert myself (into a centre-half).

"I feel quite positive about being in there.

"Obviously, it's a different type of football at Eastleigh and in the Conference, but the fundamental things remain the same.

"We do try and play a bit of football here, not as much as Bournemouth obviously, but it's different circumstances. I feel good about it."

All that hard work invested in adapting to his new role, however, came to an abrupt halt with a fractured tibia suffered in April 2013.

It was an all too familiar setback, Partington's progress since his dramatic introduction onto the Cherries' scene having been routinely hampered by various injury problems.

In this instance, things took a further turn for the worse when, following his initial operation, he picked up an infection.

Seven months after the ordeal Partington confessed that he had been "low enough to think about stopping".

Reflecting on that period of his life today, a fit and healthy Partington is rather more sanguine.

"When you spend so long injured, thoughts do go through your head.

"I spent a lot of time not really being able to do anything, then when I was getting fit I had to have four more operations to cure an infection.

"I had my leg open for a week or so and spent a week in hospital.

"Nothing looked that good and you get a bit down when you're in hospital and looking at your leg.

"People have been worse off than me and kept going, so I've got to count myself lucky that I'm still fit.

Continued on page 18

ADVANCE FIXTURES for the week ahead

From facing page...

Division 5: Botley Village v Romsey Town Panthers, Hedge End Rangers Blue v Wellow, Hythe Strikers Spitfires v Oakwood Saints.

Under 13s

Southampton Tyro Challenge Cup, quarter-finals: Whiteley Wanderers v Bitterne Black.

Division 1: Totton & Eling Red v Hedge End Rangers Blue, Winchester Black v Warsash Wasps.

Division 2: Fleming Park Tigers v Golden Common Rangers, Hythe Strikers v Sportstars, Southbrook United v Botley Village.

Division 3: Hamble United Red v Littleton Juniors Leopards, Hythe & Dibden Vikings v St Francis Rangers, Sarisbury Sparks v Bitterne Red, Weston Warriors v Romsey Town.

Division 4: AFC Hittingbury Hawks v Sholing Youth, Baddesley park v Wellow, Totton & Eling Black v Oakwood Reds, Wyvern Dragons v AFC Stoneham.

Division 5: BTC Southampton v Alesford Town, Kingsway Colts v Fawley Falcons.

U14s

Division 1: Botley Village v AFC Stoneham Red, Eastleigh v Colden Common Rovers, Hedge End Rangers Blue v Stockbridge.

Division 2: Ice Sports v Warsash Wasps, QK Southampton v Golden Common Rangers, St Francis Rangers v Hedge End Rangers White.

Division 3: Baddesley Park v St Francis Rovers, Hamble United v Bitterne Black, Hythe & Dibden Phoenix v AFC Stoneham Blue, Michelmersh & T v AFC Hittingbury, Southside AFC v Oakwood Eagles.

Division 4: Bitterne Red v Sarisbury Sparks, FC Southampton v Alesford Town, Rodaway Rovers v Fawley Falcons, Romsey Town Cougars v Winsor United, S & D v Hythe & Dibden Legends.

U15s

Southampton Tyro Challenge Cup, semi-final: Compton v Winchester Black, QK Southampton v Sportstars.

Tommy Traynor Trophy, semi-final: Oakwood Lions v Hythe Strikers, Romsey Town Cougars v Chamberlayne Athletic.

Division 1: Warsash Wasps v Sholing.

Division 2: Golden Common Rangers v Baddesley Park Crusaders, Oaklands Rangers v Hamble United, Sky Blues v Hedge End Rangers Blue.

Division 3: AFC Hittingbury Hawks v Botley Village, Hythe & Dibden Vipers v Romsey Town Panthers, Wellow v Southside AFC.

Division 4: Winsor United Sports v Stoke Park Rangers.

Division 5: Bitterne v Townhill Llingland.

HAMPSHIRE WOMENS LEAGUE

Division 1: Shanklin res v AFC boscombe, Winchester City Flyers v Christchurch.

Division 2: BTC (Southampton) v Warsash Wasps, Bursledon v Gosport Borough Res, Kingsclere v Mudeford Phoenix, Winchester City v Winchester City Flyers Res.

Division 3: Basingstoke Town Res v Sholing, Hordean v Alderbury, Tadley Calleva v Widbrook United Res.

U18s Division 4: Winchester City flyers v Portsmouth, Southampton Saints v Mudeford Phoenix Flames.

Monday, Feb 9

SKY BET LEAGUE

League 1: Bradford v Milton Keynes Dons.

VANARAMA FOOTBALL CONFERENCE

South: Farnborough v Boreham Wood.

WYVERN COMBINATION LEAGUE

Premier Division: Team Solent v Moneyfields, Division One East: Folland Sports v Fareham Town.

Tuesday, Feb 10

BARCLAYS PREMIER LEAGUE

Arsenal v Leicester, Hull v Aston Villa, Liverpool v Tottenham Hotspur, Sunderland v QPR.

SKY BET LEAGUE

Championship: Birmingham v Millwall, Blackburn v Rotherham, Blackpool v Middlesbrough, Bolton v Fulham, Bournemouth v Derby, Brentford v Watford, Cardiff v Brighton, Charlton v Norwich, Huddersfield v Wolverhampton, Ipswich v Sheff Wed, Reading v Leeds.

League 1: Barnsley v Fleetwood Town, Bristol City v Port Vale, Chesterfield v Preston, Coventry v Scunthorpe, Crawley Town v Doncaster, Crewe v Yeovil, Leyton Orient v Notts County, Oldham v Swindon, Peterborough v Gillingham, Sheff Utd v Colchester, Walsall v Rochdale.

League 2: Accrington Stanley v Oxford Utd, Burton Albion v AFC Wimbledon, Carlisle v Shrewsbury, Dag & Red v Portsmouth, Exeter v Cambridge Utd, Hartlepool v Northampton, Luton v York, Morecambe v Mansfield, Newport County v Tranmere, Southend v Cheltenham, Stevenage v Bury, Wycombe v Plymouth.

VANARAMA FOOTBALL CONFERENCE

Premier: Alfreton v Forest Green Rovers, FC Halifax v Gateshead, Macclesfield v Altrincham, Southport v Eastleigh.

South: Concord v Chelmsford, Ebbsfleet v Staines, Havant & Waterlooville v St Albans, Weston-super-Mare v Bath City.

EVO-STIK SOUTHERN LEAGUE

Premier Division: Histon v Slough, Hungerford v St Neots, Weymouth v Poole Town.

Division One South & West: Bashley v Bridgwater, Bishops Cleeve v Tiverton, Cinderford v Evesham, Fleet Town v Taunton.

SYDENHAMS WESSEX LEAGUE

Premier Division: Moneyfields v AFC Portchester.

Division One: Hythe & Dibden v US Portsmouth.

RUSSELL COTES CUP

Quarter-finals: Sholing v Follands Sports v Hordean, Gosport Borough v Bashley v Blackfield & Langley.

NORTH HANTS SENIOR CUP

Overton v Whitchurch, Tadley Calleva v Winchester City.

Continued on page 18...

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Non-league Football

ADVANCE FIXTURES for the week ahead

From page 17...

WYVERN COMBINATION LEAGUE

Premier Division: Ringwood Town v Sholing, John Stimpson Memorial Shield, league phase: A, Dorchester Town v Downton.

Wednesday, Feb 11

BARCLAYS PREMIER LEAGUE

Chelsea v Everton, Crystal Palace v Newcastle, Man Utd v Burnley, Southampton v West Ham, Stoke v Man City, West Brom v Swansea.

SKY BET LEAGUE

Championship: Nottm Forest v Wigan.

EVO-STIK SOUTHERN LEAGUE

Premier Division: Frome v Dorchester.

SALISBURY HOSPITAL CUP

Amesbury Town v Laverstock & Ford.

WYVERN COMBINATION LEAGUE

Premier Division: Petersfield Town v AFC Portchester.

Thursday, February 12

WYVERN COMBINATION LEAGUE

Wyvern Challenge Cup, second round: Winchester City v AFC Totton.

Saturday, February 14

FA CUP

Fifth Round: Blackburn v Stoke, Derby v Reading, West Brom v West Ham, Crystal Palace v Liverpool.

SKY BET LEAGUE

Championship: Blackpool v Nottm Forest, Bolton v Watford, Bournemouth v Huddersfield, Charlton v Brentford, Fulham v Ipswich, Leeds v Millwall, Norwich v Wolverhampton, Sheff Wed v Brighton. **League 1:** Bristol City v Sheff Utd, Chesterfield v Leyton Orient, Crawley Town v Barnsley, Crewe v Fleetwood Town, Doncaster v Yeovil, Gillingham v Milton Keynes Dons, Oldham v Colchester, Peterborough v Rochdale, Scunthorpe v Swindon, Walsall v Port Vale.

League 2: Burton Albion v Oxford Utd, Cheltenham v Bury, Hartlepool v Stevenage, Luton v Carlisle, Mansfield v Northampton, Plymouth v Cambridge Utd, Portsmouth v Exeter, Shrewsbury v AFC Wimbledon, Southend v Accrington Stanley, Wycombe v Newport County, York v Tranmere. **VARANAM FOOTBALL CONFERENCE** **Premier:** AFC Telford v Dartford, Aldershot v Welling, Altrincham v Forest Green Rovers, Braintree v Alfreton, Eastleigh v Torquay, FC Halifax v Dover, Gateshead v Nuneaton, Grimsby v Bristol Rovers, Kidderminster v Woking, Lincoln v Chester, Southport v Macclesfield, Wrexham v Barnet.

South: Bishops Cleeve v Ebbsfleet, Boreham Wood v Concord, Bromley v Hayes & Yeading, Eastbourne Borough v Havant & Waterlooville, Farnborough v Hemel Hempstead, Gosport Borough v Bath City, Maidenhead v Chelmsford, St Albans v Basingstoke, Staines v Wealdstone, Sutton v Weston-super-Mare.

EVO-STIK SOUTHERN LEAGUE

Premier Division: Banbury v Truro, Burnham v St Neots, Cirencester v Cambridge City, Corby v Chippenham, Dunstable v Dorchester, Frome v Chesham, Histon v Poole Town, Hitchin v Hungerford, Paulton Rovers v Biggleswade, Slough v Arlesley, Weymouth v Redditch.

Division One South & West: AFC Totton v Shortwood, Bridgwater v Yate, Larkhall v Stratford, Mangotsfield v Didcot, Merthyr Town v Taunton, North Leigh v Cinderford, Sholing v Evesham, Swindon Supermarine v Clevedon, Tiverton v Fleet Town, Wantage v Bashley, Wimborne v Bishops Cleeve.

SYDENHAMS WESSEX LEAGUE

Premier Division: Blackfield & Langley v Newport IOW, Bournemouth Poppies v AFC Portchester, Christchurch v Alresford, Fawley AFC v Totton & Eling, Hamworthy Utd v Bemerton HH, Horndean v Andover Town, Moneyfields v Follands, Petersfield v Brockenhurst, Verwood v Fareham Town, Whitchurch v Lyminster Town.

Division One: Amesbury v Hythe & Dibden, Downton v Tadley Calleva, East Cowes Vics v Andover NS, Laverstock & Ford v Ringwood, Pewsey Vale v Romsey Town, Team Solent v New Milton, US Portsmouth v Fleet Spurs.

PUMA ENGINEERING HAMPSHIRE PREMIER LEAGUE

Premier Division: AFC Stoneham v Baffins Milton Rovers, Colden Common v Otterbourne, Hamble Club v Liss Athletic, Headley Utd v Fleetlands, Liphook v Overton, Paulsgrove v Locks Heath, QK Southampton v Clanfield, Stockbridge v Bush Hill, Winchester Castle v Hedge End Rangers. **Division One:** AFC Petersfield v Michelmersh & Timbury, Andover Lions v Netley Central, Broughton v Cadnam, Hayling Utd v Lyndhurst, Infinity v Upham.

Combination: Clanfield v Hamble Club, Fleetlands v Winchester Castle, Hedge End Rangers v Headley Utd, Liss Athletic v AFC Stoneham, Otterbourne v QK Southampton, Overton v Paulsgrove.

WYVERN COMBINATION LEAGUE

Premier Division: Bemerton HH v Team Solent, Ringwood v AFC Portchester.

Division One East: Fareham Town v Alton Town, Folland Sports v US Portsmouth, Tadley Calleva v Horndean.

Division One West: Bashley v East Cowes Vics, Hythe & Dibden v Fawley AFC, Lyminster Town v Verwood, Romsey v Blackfield & Langley, John Stimpson Memorial Shield, league phase: C, Newport IOW v Sholing.

LOAN STAR JOE'S

From page 17

"I've had major operations and I'm still lucky enough to be able to play. People have had worse injuries than me and are still playing – others have had injuries that weren't as bad as mine but which have stopped them playing."

Back on his feet, Partington was offered the chance to start 2014 with Aldershot; a spell that was intended to fulfil the dual purpose of allowing the player to recover his match legs, while acclimatising to his new duties 'on-the-job'.

Away from the plusher environs at Bournemouth, the defender had to quickly adapt to reduced surroundings – and a different brand of football.

Partington smiles wryly as he recalls a "difficult night" when he turned out for his loan club on a filthy evening as the Shots slumped to a 4-1 defeat at Havant & Waterlooville in an FA Trophy quarter-final clash, but he considers the time spent in North Hampshire to have been a valuable experience.

"When you go to different places the quality of the football does change. That's sometimes not down to ability."

"Everyone's got a different opinion on how the game should be played: different teams you go into, different players have all got different ability."

"When I went into Aldershot I was in the same position (as today). I hadn't played a lot of football and when that's the case no one can really form an opinion on you to pick you to play."

"I appreciated Aldershot letting me play and for a month I felt like I did alright – until I ended up getting injured."

That injury, picked up minutes into a game at Dartford on February 25 last year, forced Partington onto the sidelines until December – and has left the 24-year-old with a permanent reminder of its severity.

"(It was) an LCL (Lateral Collateral Ligament) rupture and something else in my knee had popped out."

"I had that reconstructed and that's why I've got bolts and screws in my knee now – but I feel all right."

After his stay with Aldershot was so cruelly cut short, Partington is delighted that he now has the chance to bed in for a significant period of time at his latest temporary home.

That emotion is accentuated by the fact that he has always felt like a slight outsider throughout Bournemouth's staggering rise

HONOUR: Joe Partington is presented with a Wales cap by Bournemouth boss Eddie Howe and, inset, in action for Eastleigh.



from League Two strugglers to Championship promotion contenders.

What's more, having created such a notable impression with the Cherries so soon after arriving as a 16-year-old following his release by then Premier League Portsmouth, Partington acknowledges that it is now time for him to take centre stage again.

"I've been at Bournemouth a long time, but I've never really been completely a part of what's going on."

"I wasn't in the team when I was younger, then I've had injuries and, more recently, when the lads were pushing on and being promoted I've never felt as much a part of what's going on as everybody else."

"It's nice that, hopefully, if we can achieve something this year at Eastleigh then I'll feel a part of that."

"This last month I've felt a part of something. Maybe I didn't have

that feeling at Bournemouth because they're doing so well – you're out of the team, you're injured and you don't really get that feeling."

"Since then (when he made his initial impact at Bournemouth) I've never really pushed on and, in my own honest opinion, I've never really done anything since (I was) quite an early age, for whatever reason."

"Hopefully now that I'm playing I'll be able to enjoy more positive times."

Since his switch to Stoneham Lane, Partington has been limited, due to the Spitfires having three games postponed in January, to three appearances for his new side.

Nevertheless, the club's supporters have seen enough to realise that their team being assured of the defender's services for the remainder of the campaign represents something of a coup for Eastleigh

boss Richard Hill.

Being locally reared, Partington is perfectly placed to appreciate the strides being made at the Silverlake Stadium.

"It's slightly odd. When I was young, growing up around the area, I used to play football games all around here."

"I used to train over the road when I was a kid at Portsmouth."

"I obviously knew that Eastleigh were here, but it's only in the last couple of years that they've really pushed on and done really well."

"Everyone's always been aware of Eastleigh as a team, but in terms of them kicking on and going for leagues, the last couple of years have been really strong."

"I've known Greener (Eastleigh left-back Michael Green) a little bit and the year before it was well documented that Eastleigh were doing well and pushing towards the top of the league. Being local, everyone

Non-league Football

EASTLEIGH AIMS



was hearing about it and noticing how well they were doing because, at the time, nobody expected it.

"It's really positive for the club and this year they have attracted players who could be playing in the Football League.

"What's going on down here is really positive and I'm happy to be a part of that."

Indeed, Partington doesn't believe his loanee status is any bar to his becoming completely immersed in the Spitfires' tilt at reaching the Conference Premier's season concluding play-offs, with their potential prize of promotion into the football league.

"It's nice to stay until the end of the season. I've come in and got on with the guys, got on with the manager and everyone here.

"It's a nice feeling and a relief. "I feel really positive about what's going on, so hopefully I'll be able to get a good amount of football in

before the end of the season."

At the same time as Partington's time with Eastleigh is due to end, so too will his contract at Bournemouth.

Maybe staying faithful to a vow made late in 2013, when he was in the full-throes of recovery after the complications that arose subsequent to his fractured tibia, the player is determined to cast aside any worries about what might happen in the summer.

Partington's commitment 14 months ago to "do my best every single day to better myself and to improve" rings true as he considers what lies ahead.

"I'm just totally focused now on playing football. Whatever happens in the summer happens in the summer. I can't control that.

"I've just got to try and control the things that I can, which is my football – and to do my best to play as well as I can between now and the

end of the season to ultimately achieve something with Eastleigh.

"Hopefully then something will come to me individually, whatever that may be."

If the mature and spirited Partington is ever in search of inspiration as he goes about rejuvenating his career, then he won't be short of sources.

Firstly, there is the inside view he has been granted to Howe's transformation of AFC Bournemouth.

There is actually, reveals Partington, no great secret to the methods that have bred such unprecedented success in Dorset.

"It's the hard work that they put in. It's relentless, every day. Everything is done with so much care.

"All the training is specific towards playing football. It's no accident that the lads play such good football on a Saturday and on a Tuesday night, because every day in training they're working on these things as a group and individually.

"Lads are staying behind in training, or getting out early for training. Everything is worked on.

"At the start of this season I saw a lot of football at Bournemouth. I've been there for a long time and this year really is the best football that Bournemouth have ever played – and possibly (the best) in the Championship at the moment."

Beyond reaping the benefits of seeing first-hand the results of his Cherries' colleagues' training ground industry, Partington can look for motivation to the fortunes of some of his contemporaries when he was earning eight caps for Wales' under-21 side (a nation he qualifies to play for through his Welsh mother, Tina).

Newcastle United's Paul Dummett, Jazz Richards, on loan with Fulham from Swansea City, and Jonny Williams of Crystal Palace have all gone on to win full international honours.

Accordingly, that Premier League trio's progress offers encouragement to the player who served as their captain in Brian Flynn's young Welsh team.

"It's nice to see those guys doing so well. They're all great players.

"Like I said with Bournemouth, it's no accident that those lads are doing so well because they are very good players. There is a reason why they were in the (Wales) under-21 squad and are now in the first-team squad.

"Where they are is testament to how hard they've worked.

"It's something for me to look up to because I have played with those players and now they're doing so well.

"If I can take on what I'm doing – and stay fit, because I do feel that I have been held back, but I can't keep using that as an excuse, I don't want to talk about it all the time – I'd like to kick on now.

"I'm 24 so quite young. I've got time now to hopefully kick on and make a career for myself."

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SUNDAY FOOTBALL

Watts nets nine goals

Senior, Junior 1 & 2: Southern League Sholing's Nick Watts netted three hat-tricks in one game for City of Southampton Sunday League Senior Division outfit Sholing United in a 11-1 mauling of Cricketers Arms Fair Oak.

In this mid-table clash United were in the driving seat from the word go, scoring eight in the opening 45 minutes.

Watts' exploits in front of goal were added to by Richard Emery and Craig Paskins. Lee Magee responded.

AFC Bursledon remain top of the division with a 3-2 comeback win over fellow title chasers KRL.

The third place side were 2-0 up at the break with goals from Scott Saunders and Terry Fredericks but Bursledon resurged in the second half.

Ben Dashwood hit a brace and Darren Nutbeen struck to keep their place at the summit.

AFC West End continued their championship tilt with a 3-0 win over bottom side Aldermoor United thanks to a Craig Harding hat-trick.

Junior 1 rock-bottom outfit Chartwell Green hit three past high fliers Languard Rovers but were still defeat 4-3.

Sam McCall, Jordan Collett and Denis Jack were on target but Languard hit back through Nick Skolsky's double – one coming from the penalty spot and the other a spectacular 30 yard free kick. Charlie Neocleous and Jordan Djillali got the other goals.

COMEBACK

Glen pulled level on points with top side Ice House, who weren't in action, with a 3-2 comeback against Sky Blues.

Dan Fry's brace and Alex Waterman's goal ensured a second half resurgence. Sam Taggart and Ryan Williams had given Blues a 2-1 lead at the interval.

Sam Bessant scored twice as fourth placed Titans beat fifth placed AFC Riverside 2-1.

Cameron Marsh-White replied.

AFC Portswood moved away from the Junior 1 drop zone with a 4-3 win over Chamberlayne Athletic.

Eric Makate (2), Ayham Al-Mohammad and Rob North all found the net. Nick Simpkins's double and Adam Smith replied.

S&D ran out convincing 5-1 winner over rock-bottom Athleticco Tin Hut in Junior 2.

The table toppers went ahead through Jordan Prince's penalty before Baz Rai and Aiden Collins struck twice each to sink Hut. Eliot Weaver replied.

Hamble Roll Calls Reserves meanwhile, kept the pressure on S&D by beating LH Galaxy 3-0.

Patrick Goode scored twice, adding to Daniel Diaper's goal.

And in the other game in Junior 2, Lokomotiv Eastleigh beat Phoenix AFC 3-1 in a mid-table tussle.

Alex Hood, Danny Mead and Gavin Cross cancelled out Ben Light's response.

Boyatt Wood Wanderers, from the third tier, went through to the third round of the DR Ryder Trophy with a 7-1 battering of Bishops. Warren Applegate notched a hat-trick, while Craig Phillips and Adam Shepherd bagged one each. Paul Tanner struck the consolation goal.

MORE SUNDAY FOOTBALL ON PAGE 26

Saints Spotlight

HIT AND MISS

RYAN Bertrand this week became the 24th permanent signing by Saints during a winter transfer window.

The window opened for the first time in 2003 when Saints splashed out £4m on two players – Danny Higginbotham and David Prutton.

Here, **ADAM LEITCH** looks back at the deals and decides whether they were a success or not.

2002/03

Danny Higginbotham, Derby, £1.25m

A Gordon Strachan signing right at the end of the first January transfer window, Higginbotham proved a versatile defender for Saints, operating at both left back and centre half.

Sadly for he and fellow January 2003 signing David Prutton, they joined Saints at the very peak of their most recent successes, and then were at the club as it all tailed off.

Higginbotham managed over 100 appearances for Saints before a move to Stoke where he enjoyed several more years of top flight football.

There was a bizarre end to his career when he made his international debut for Gibraltar in a friendly against Slovakia in November 2013 at the age of 34, qualifying through his maternal grandmother.

In January 2014, Higginbotham retired from club football – he had been playing Conference Premier football for Chester – but made two more international appearances for Gibraltar until his international retirement two months later.

HIT

David Prutton, Nottingham Forest, £2.5m

An intriguing character who had a host of highs and lows at Saints.

Prutton initially promised so much and his gritty midfield performances suggested a career that would be spent at the highest echelons of the game.

However, it never quite happened for him.

The nadir at Saints came when he received a lengthy ban for shoving a linesman at St Mary's after being sent off against Arsenal in February 2005, which didn't help their doomed battle for Premier League survival.

There were good displays at Saints but he was eventually released, despite being one of the club's most expensive ever signings.

Now 33, he is without a club, having ended last season on loan at Coventry prior to being released by Sheffield Wednesday.

MISS

2003/04

Paul Smith, Brentford, £250,000

Life at Saints was very stop-start for Paul Smith. He was a deputy for Antti Niemi and never really got going under his own steam when he got given the opportunities.

After two and half years at Saints, which had yielded just 22 appearances, he was sold to Nottingham Forest.



Later signed for Middlesbrough before joining Southend in the summer of 2012.

Has made just one appearance in the League Cup this season.

MISS

Stephen Crainey, Celtic, £500,000

Gordon Strachan brought in Crainey to give him another option at left back. But Strachan was gone within weeks and Crainey had left before the start of the next season, moving to Leeds.

He featured in only five games for Saints, none of which they won.

Signed for Blackpool in 2007 and during a six-year stay helped the Tangerines win a place in the Premier League in 2009/10.

Signed for League 1 club Fleetwood Town last summer, and he has been a regular.

MISS

2004/05

Jamie Redknapp, Tottenham, free

As Harry Redknapp battled desperately to build a squad capable of keeping Saints in the Premier League, he called upon son Jamie to come and help him out.

In truth, it was a case of nothing ventured, nothing gained as Redknapp junior cost nothing and then hung up his boots at the end of the season.

His signing at least gave Saints a bit of hope and he did put in some good performances in his brief stint of 17 games at the club.

He proved to be one of his dad's better St Mary's deals, not that that is saying much.

HIT



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Saints Spotlight

SIGNINGS...



Nigel Quashie, Portsmouth, £2.1m
Whole-hearted footballer who crossed the Portsmouth divide to follow Redknapp over to St Mary's. He gave it a good go but couldn't help keep Saints up.

The midfielder was gone again a year later, joining West Bromwich Albion for almost £1m less than Saints had paid for him.

MISS

Olivier Bernard, Newcastle, £400,000
Another Redknapp signing to try to bolster Saints' survival prospects, but another that didn't pay dividends with Premier League relegation being confirmed.

Saints paid out £400,000 for the left back's services but he left just seven months later for Rangers.

MISS

2005/06

Bartosz Bialkowski, Gornik Zabrze, £50,000
When he was recruited by

George Burley and goalkeeping coach Malcolm Webster as a teenager from Poland, so much was expected.

Bialkowski didn't have to wait for his chance either and was superb on his first run in the team, which was brought to a sad end by a tear of his cruciate ligament in an FA Cup game at Newcastle just a month after his arrival.

Bialkowski was never been quite the same, though did give the club six years of service before he was released in 2012.

He spent two years as a regular at Notts County before signing for Ipswich, for whom he featured in an FA Cup replay against Saints last month.

HIT

Jim Brennan, Norwich, free

Provided some brief cover at left back at the back end of the season but left when his short term contract expired just months after he joined.

MISS

Alexander Ostlund, Feyenoord, £400,000

Bit of a mixed bag at Saints. Became an iconic character because of his long hair and beard, having joined with a bit of a fanfare and expectation on his shoulders.

Didn't let anybody down when he played, but that wasn't too often.

In two and a half years at Saints he made just 49 appearances for the club but is still fondly remembered.

HIT

2008/09

Lee Molyneux, Everton, free

A signing that never took off.

Molyneux was a capture Saints were quite proud of, such was his reputation at Everton as a youngster.

However, not long after joining and breaking into the team he was sent off on his fourth appearance against Swansea.

Saints were relegated and Molyneux, surplus to requirements after just four appearances for the club, was released from his contract by mutual consent a year early.

MISS

Ryan Smith, Millwall, free

After a good display at Watford, Mark Wotte hailed Ryan Smith as having world class abilities – he just needed to produce it more consistently.

That never happened at Saints who were relegated in his one season at the club.

MISS

2009/10

Jose Fonte, Crystal Palace, £1.2m

The Portuguese centre half has been an excellent signing for Saints.

When he joined, then boss Alan Pardew identified Fonte as a player that could go through the leagues with Saints and represent the club in the Premier League.

Fonte dropped down a division to join Saints

CONTINUED ON PAGE 22

Blow to City title hopes

MANCHESTER City's Barclays Premier League title hopes suffered another setback as they needed an stoppage-time equaliser from James Milner (below right) to snatch a 1-1 draw at home to struggling Hull.

David Meyler capitalised on poor City defending to fire Steve Bruce's side ahead in the 35th minute, thus condemning City to a fifth match without a win in all competitions.

That wretched run, which has yielded just two points from a possible 12 and seen them knocked out of the FA Cup by Middlesbrough, has seen them drop seven points behind leaders Chelsea after Jose Mourinho's men won 2-1 at Aston Villa.

To make matters worse for the champions, they were up against a Tigers side who came into the game in the relegation zone and on the back of four straight defeats.

A first goal in five matches helped Hull stop the rot and move out of the bottom three, but were denied all three points by Milner's brilliant free-kick two minutes into time added on. Chelsea were also facing a team for whom goalscoring has

become alien and sealed victory thanks to efforts from Eden Hazard after eight minutes and Branislav Ivanovic with a brilliant volley after 66.

In between times Jores Okore ended Villa's 11-hour wait for a goal in the league, but it was not enough to earn a point.

In the lunchtime kick-off, Harry Kane (above) scored twice, heading an 86th-minute winner, as Tottenham came from behind to beat Arsenal 2-1 in the north London derby at White Hart Lane.

Mesut Ozil's opener gave the Gunners the early advantage, but Kane tapped in the equaliser shortly after the break before leaping to nod Nabil Bentaleb's cross past David Ospina to send the hosts above their bitter rivals in the table and level on points with Manchester United in fourth.

Crystal Palace's revival under Alan Pardew continued as Joe Ledley's goal earned them a 1-0 success at bottom side Leicester.

Swansea came from behind to draw 1-1 at home to Sunderland, Ki Sung-yueng's equaliser cancelling out Jermain Defoe's (above right) opener.



Saints Spotlight



Pearson's back with Jam Boys

ADAM Pearson's stint at Bashley did not last long.

The big defender played only a couple of games for the Southern One South & West strugglers before returning to his Whitchurch United roots.

Pearson was bang in the heart of the action in the Jam Boys' 3-1 win over Winchester City last Saturday. It was he who caught an elbow from City's Charlie Smeeton that resulted in the Winchester man's second-half dismissal.

That levelled things up ten-versus-ten after Jack McCarthy had got his marching orders in the first half for two bookable offences.

McCarthy's first booking came as a result of a tussle with City midfielder Micky Hubbard, who was also yellow carded, and his second came when he foolishly kicked the ball away as Winchester 'keeper Gareth Barfoot prepared to take a free-kick.

"Jack was making the point that Barfoot was taking the free-kick in the wrong place, but he should have known



ADAM PEARSON

better," said Whitchurch boss Carl Bennett. "The 'keeper had put the ball down and stepped back for the run-up and Jack was booked for interfering with play.

"I can understand why he was yellow-carded, but about ten minutes before that Barfoot had punched the ball off the roof of the net and out of the ground to slow us down taking a corner."

Those flashpoints were far from isolated incidents in a heated encounter which also saw Winchester's assistant managers John McFarlane and Glenn Burnett dismissed from the dugout.

McFarlane - co-manager with Bennett at Romsey Town last season - was first to go after wading in to try and break up the McCarthy-Hubbard clash. Burnett followed later for venting his wrath at one of the referee's assistants.

Much has been made of the handling of the game on social media, but Bennett said: "I didn't think the referee (Paula Wyatt) had a bad game.

"I've got a lot of time for Paul (City boss Paul Masters), John and Glenn, but they were questioning every decision."

Pearson's return to the United ranks gave recent arrival Matt Austin the chance to play up front for the first time.

Austin, signed from Hamble Club, was a regular up front during Bennett's Romsey days but has been more of an all-rounder at Longmeadow.

"Adam Pearson had left so Matt came in and did a job at centre-half and then went into central midfield for a couple of games," Bennett explained. "But with Adam coming back, he was able to go up front and last Saturday proved the point that he's a very good forward."

It was Thoroughgood who cancelled out Danny Phillips' opener before United sealed the points with late goals from Tom Lockyer and Austin.

Whitchurch were brought down to earth on Tuesday, however, beaten 4-0 away to a Petersfield Town side who roared back to the top of the table.

From page 21

and hasn't looked back.

Signed a new contract last summer and was rewarded with the captaincy by Ronald Koeman.

HIT

Daniel Seaborne, Exeter City, £250,000

Was making some real progress before an off-field incident outside a Southampton nightspot in September 2011 led to a lengthy lay-off.

Was released in 2013 after falling well down the pecking order.

Joined Yeovil Town but only spent half a season there before moving to Coventry.

He left the Sky Blues last summer to join Scottish Premier League club Partick Thistle, where he has made 17 league starts so far.

MISS

Jon Otsemobor, Norwich, free

Was brought in on a short term contract and did a job for the club in a few months at St Mary's, even if he wasn't a favourite with sections of the fans.

Never a long term signing but did what was asked of him.

HIT

Lee Barnard, Southend, £175,000

Did a real job for Saints in League One. First he scored nine goals in 14 starts (plus six as a sub) in the second half of 2009/10.

Then he struck 14 times in 24 starts (plus 12 off the bench) as Saints won promotion in 2010/11.

Fell out of favour as soon as the club reached the Championship and was released last summer.

Rejoined Southend, but has only made two League 2 starts this season.

Netted three times in six appearances for fellow fourth tier club Stevenage in a loan spell before Christmas.

HIT

Jason Puncheon, Plymouth, £250,000

Was somewhat of an enigma at Saints.

Signed by Alan Pardew, Puncheon fell out of favour under Nigel Adkins to start with and was loaned to Millwall, Blackpool and QPR.

At times it seemed his St Mary's career was over, but Puncheon was to emerge as a regular for Saints in the club's Premier League return campaign of 2012/13.

It was something of a surprise when Mauricio Pochettino allowed Puncheon to return to his south London roots in the summer of 2013 and join Crystal Palace on loan.

The move was eventually made permanent, with the winger now reunited with the manager who signed him for Saints five years ago.

HIT

2010/11

Jonathan Forte, Scunthorpe, undisclosed

Found chances very hard to come by during his time at St Mary's.

Did score two vital goals against MK Dons in League One in April 2011, as Saints came from 0-2 down to win 3-2, but did not really have any other significant impact prior to being released last summer.

Is enjoying a good season at League 1 club Oldham, with 14 goals in 19 starts plus two off the bench so far.

MISS

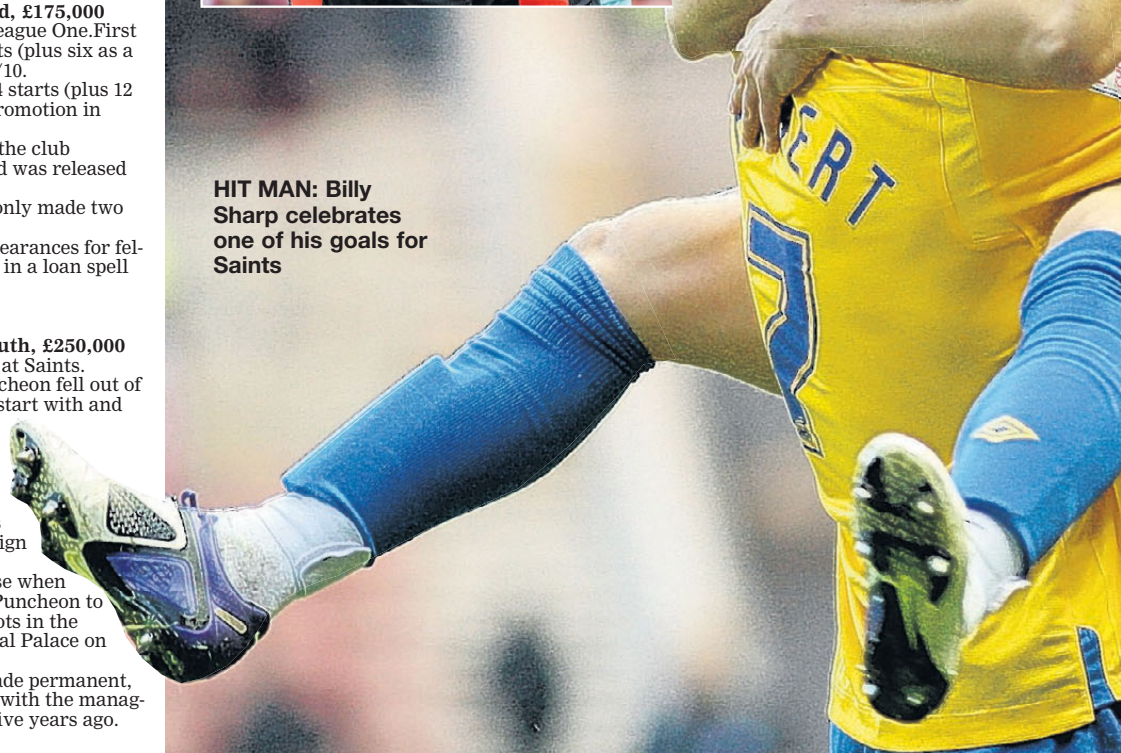
Richard Chaplow, Preston, £50,000

Saints fans knew all about Chaplow after

SUCCESS: Guly Do Prado with Jos Hooiveld



HIT MAN: Billy Sharp celebrates one of his goals for Saints



two loan spells with the club and were pleased to see him eventually join the club permanently.

Chaplow was a hit or miss type of player during his time at Saints but provided some valuable work before moving to Millwall in 2013.

Has been restricted to ten appearances this term, the last of which came in a miserable 4-0 FA Cup thrashing at lower division Bradford City last month.

HIT

Guly do Prado, Cessena, undisclosed

His Saints career was one of frustration and delight in equal measure.

He was released last summer having scored

23 goals in 118 league and cup appearances.

But he only netted once in his last 47 outings for the club, and that was a penalty against Yeovil in the FA Cup last season.

Helped Saints to back to back promotions, scoring 11 times in both the 2010/11 and 2011/12 campaigns.

Was restricted to 30 appearances in his last two seasons, most of which came off the bench.

Recently signed for Major Soccer League club Chicago Fire.

HIT

2011/12

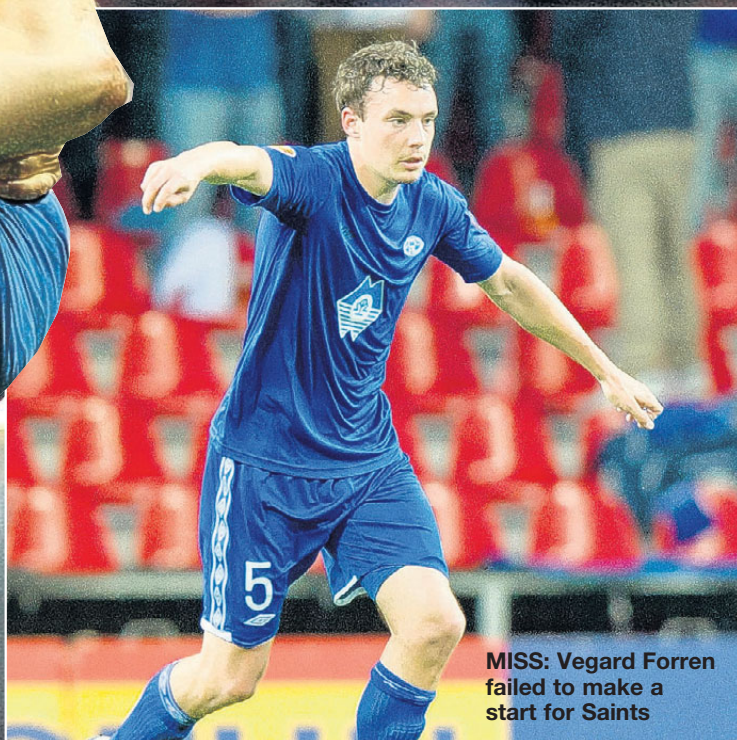
Tadanari Lee, Sanif Hirosima, free

JUNIOR FOOTBALL - SEE PAGES 28 AND 29

Saints Spotlight



BEST BUYS IN THE WINTER WINDOW



MISS: Vegard Forren failed to make a start for Saints

The Japanese striker arrived in a blaze of publicity with talk of him taking the Saints brand global.

However, it never happened for the man who scored the winning goal in the 2011 Asian Cup final.

A mixture of injuries and an inability to claim a regular place for himself saw him return to his native country in the January 2014 transfer window to join Urawa Red Diamonds.

Only made seven league appearances for Saints, three of them off the bench.

MISS

Billy Sharp, Doncaster, £1.8m
A very short term hit for Saints.

Was brought in to deliver the goals to get Saints promoted from the Championship, and duly did exactly what was asked of him, bagging nine in 15 matches.

However, he just wasn't fancied at Premier League level and was shipped out on loan to Nottingham Forest, Reading and former club Doncaster prior to joining Leeds last summer.

Scored only his second goal in 20 appearances for the Yorkshire club last weekend, coming off the bench to grab a last minute derby winner at Huddersfield.

HIT

2012/13

Vegard Forren, Molde, £4m

Will go down as one of the most bizarre signings in the club's history.

The Norwegian international defender joined Saints from Molde for £4m in January 2013 but returned the following July for an undisclosed fee having failed to make a single first team appearance.

MISS

LOAN SIGNINGS

In addition to their permanent signings, Saints have also made several loan additions during previous January transfer windows.

Some have been spectacularly bad, such as Aston Villa's Stephen O'Halloran and Tottenham's Iago Falque.

O'Halloran only made one Championship sub appearance after arriving in January 2008.

And Falque made just one start after being brought in by Nigel Adkins in January 2012.

That was in a 2-0 St Mary's loss to Leicester City, where Falque was substituted and never seen again.

Adkins had previously brought in Dany N'Guessan in the January 2011 transfer window on loan from Leicester City.

The striker made six League One appearances in his time at St Mary's, without scoring.

Scored eight goals for Swindon in 2013/14 before moving to Port Vale.

After two goals in 11 League 1 outings, he was released on transfer deadline day.

Henri Camara enjoyed better times at St Mary's after Harry Redknapp brought him in on loan from Wolves in January 2005.

He struck four goals in 14 Premier League matches, including a dramatic late winner at home to Norwich City, but failed to keep Saints up.

Aged 37, the former Senegal international striker is still playing in the Greek League for Kalloni.

Undoubtedly the best Saints loan signing in a January window was striker Marek Saganowski.

The Polish international belted 10 goals in 11 starts, plus two off the bench, to help Saints into the Championship play-offs in 2006/07.

Saganowski was subsequently signed permanently, only for the goals to dry up.

After his great start at the club, once he was a permanent signing he could only score nine goals in 55 outings - 31 of which were starts.

Green on brink of return to United...

JOSH Green was on the brink of returning to Whitchurch United this week - little more than two months after signing for Winchester City.

Green arrived at the Denplan City Ground in late November as part of a deal that took Chris Manning in the opposite direction.

The versatile, young left-back was well-known to City's director of football Dave Malone who remembered him from his Academy days at Eastleigh.

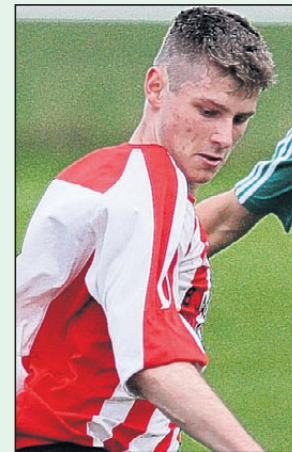
He learned his senior men's trade with Carl Bennett at Romsey Town before following the former Bypass Ground boss to Whitchurch last summer.

City had high hopes for Green when they signed him, but the youngster has had little opportunity to impress, making just three Wessex starts and one appearance off the bench.

"It's a bit of strange one," admitted Whitchurch manager Bennett.

"I've got a lot of time for Josh and I was disappointed to lose him.

"I kept an eye on Winchester's team sheet and saw he'd not been playing.



JOSH HARFIELD

"I wasn't trying to upset the apple-cart, so I phoned Dave Malone who said Josh hadn't started brilliantly and he would have a word with him.

"I thought no more of it until I got a call from Josh saying Dave had told him of our interest."

Bennett, though, has made it clear to Green that he must not expect to walk straight back into a Whitchurch side who, contrary to all expectation, are in with a strong shout of a top-four finish in the Sydenhams Premier Division.

"We're always looking to improve the squad and Josh will fight for a place with our regular left-back Josh Harfield," said the Jam Boys boss.

"Josh Harfield's been playing very well and I've told Josh (Green) he won't walk straight back in.

"But there are other areas Josh (Green) can play in. We've only got a small squad, but it's a quality squad."

Discussing Green's likely departure, Winchester boss Paul Masters said: "Whitchurch have put in seven days (notice of approach) for him.

"Josh hasn't featured too much. He's a young lad who just wants to play football."

TODAY'S FOOTBALL RESULTS - SEE PAGE 46

ICC CRICKET WORLD

GROUP A FIXTURES All times GMT

Friday, February 13, 10pm Hagley Oval, Christchurch

NEW ZEALAND v SRI LANKA

WINNER

Saturday, February 14, 3.30am MCG, Melbourne

AUSTRALIA v ENGLAND

WINNER

Monday, February 16, 10pm University Oval, Dunedin

NEW ZEALAND v SCOTLAND

WINNER

Wednesday, February 18, 3.30am Manuka Oval, Canberra

AFGHANISTAN v BANGLADESH

WINNER

Friday, February 20, 1am Westpac, Wellington

NEW ZEALAND v ENGLAND

WINNER

Saturday, February 21, 3.30am The Gabba, Brisbane

AUSTRALIA v BANGLADESH

WINNER

Saturday, February 21, 10pm University Oval, Dunedin

AFGHANISTAN v SRI LANKA

WINNER

Sunday, February 22, 10pm Hagley Oval, Christchurch

ENGLAND v SCOTLAND

WINNER

Wednesday, February 26, 10pm University Oval, Dunedin

AFGHANISTAN v SCOTLAND

WINNER

Thursday, February 26, 3.30am MCG, Melbourne

BANGLADESH v SRI LANKA

WINNER

Saturday, February 28, 1am Eden Park, Auckland

NEW ZEALAND v AUSTRALIA

WINNER

Saturday, February 28, 10pm Westpac, Wellington

ENGLAND v SRI LANKA

WINNER

Wednesday, March 4, 6.30am WACA Ground, Perth

AUSTRALIA v AFGHANISTAN

WINNER

Wednesday, March 4, 10pm Saxton Oval, Nelson

BANGLADESH v SCOTLAND

WINNER

Saturday, March 7, 10pm McLean Park, Napier

NEW ZEALAND v AFGHANISTAN

WINNER

Sunday, March 8, 3.30am SCG, Sydney

AUSTRALIA v SRI LANKA

WINNER

Monday, March 9, 3.30am Adelaide Oval, Adelaide

ENGLAND v BANGLADESH

WINNER

Wednesday, March 11, 3.30am Bellerive Oval, Hobart

SCOTLAND v SRI LANKA

WINNER

Friday, March 13, 1am Seddon Park, Hamilton

NEW ZEALAND v BANGLADESH

WINNER

Friday, March 13, 3.30am SCG, Sydney

AFGHANISTAN v ENGLAND

WINNER

Saturday, March 14, 3.30am Bellerive Oval, Hobart

AUSTRALIA v SCOTLAND

WINNER

GROUP A TABLE

Team P W L T NR NRR PTS

- 1
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5
- 6
- 7

GROUP B TABLE

Team P W L T NR NRR PTS

- 1
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5
- 6
- 7



Best batting innings

Player	Runs	Team	Opp	Ground	WC
G Kirsten	188*	SA	UAE	Rawalpindi	1996
S Ganguly	183	IND	SL	Taunton	1999
V Richards	181	WI	SL	Karachi	1987
N Kapil Dev	175*	IND	ZWE	T'bridge Wells	1983
V Sehwag	175	IND	BAN	Dhaka	2011

Best bowling innings

Player	BBI	Team	Opp	Ground	WC
G McGrath	7-15	AUS	NAM	Potchefstroom	2003
A Bichel	7-20	AUS	ENG	Port Elizabeth	2003
W Davis	7-51	WI	AUS	Headingley	1983
G Gilmour	6-14	AUS	ENG	Headingley	1975
A Nehra	6-23	IND	ENG	Durban	2003

Fastest hundreds

Player	Balls	Team	Opp	Ground	WC
K O'Brien	50	IRE	ENG	Bangalore	2011
M Hayden	66	AUS	SA	Basseterre	2007
J Davison	67	CAN	WI	Centurion	2003



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LD CUP

2015

CRICKET AUSTRALIA

GROUP B FIXTURES

Sunday, February 15, 1am Seddon Park, Hamilton SOUTH AFRICA v ZIMBABWE WINNER	Wednesday, February 25, 3.30am The Gabba, Brisbane IRELAND v UAE WINNER	Saturday, March 7, 1am Eden Park, Auckland PAKISTAN v SOUTH AFRICA WINNER
Sunday, February 15, 3.30am Adelaide Oval, Adelaide INDIA v PAKISTAN WINNER	Friday, February 27, 3.30am SCG, Sydney SOUTH AFRICA v WEST INDIES WINNER	Saturday, March 7, 3.30am Bellerive Oval, Hobart IRELAND v ZIMBABWE WINNER
Sunday, February 15, 10pm Saxton Oval, Nelson IRELAND v WEST INDIES WINNER	Saturday, February 28, 6.30am WACA Ground, Perth INDIA v UAE WINNER	Tuesday, March 10, 1am Seddon Park, Hamilton INDIA v IRELAND WINNER
Wednesday, February 18, 10pm Saxton Oval, Nelson UAE v ZIMBABWE WINNER	Sunday, March 1, 3.30am The Gabba, Brisbane PAKISTAN v ZIMBABWE WINNER	Thursday, March 12, 1am Westpac, Wellington SOUTH AFRICA v UAE WINNER
Friday, February 20, 10pm Hagley Oval, Christchurch PAKISTAN v WEST INDIES WINNER	Tuesday, March 3, 3.30am Manuka Oval, Canberra IRELAND v SOUTH AFRICA WINNER	Saturday, March 14, 1am Eden Park, Auckland INDIA v ZIMBABWE WINNER
Sunday, February 22, 3.30am MCG, Melbourne INDIA v SOUTH AFRICA WINNER	Wednesday, March 4, 1am McLean Park, Napier PAKISTAN v UAE WINNER	Saturday, March 14, 10pm McLean Park, Napier UAE v WEST INDIES WINNER
Tuesday, February 24, 3.30am Manuka Oval, Canberra WEST INDIES v ZIMBABWE WINNER	Friday, March 6, 6.30am WACA Ground, Perth INDIA v WEST INDIES WINNER	Sunday, March 15, 3.30am Adelaide Oval, Adelaide IRELAND v PAKISTAN WINNER

QUARTER-FINALS

Wednesday, March 18, 3.30am SCG, Sydney v WINNER	Friday, March 20, 3.30am Adelaide Oval, Adelaide v WINNER
Thursday, March 19, 3.30am MCG, Melbourne v WINNER	Saturday, March 21, 1am Westpac, Wellington v WINNER

SEMI-FINALS

Tuesday, March 24, 1am Eden Park, Auckland v WINNER	Thursday, March 26, 3.30am SCG, Sydney v WINNER
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FINAL

Sunday, March 29, 4.30am
MCG, Melbourne
v
WINNER

Past winners

West Indies	1975
West Indies	1979
India	1983
Australia	1987
Pakistan	1992
Sri Lanka	1996
Australia	1999
Australia	2003
Australia	2007
India	2011

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Saints Spotlight



SUNDAY FOOTBALL

Shock win over leaders

JUNIOR 3, JUNIOR 4: Charlie Dear's last gasp goal gifted Royal Marine a shock City of Southampton Sunday League Junior 4 2-1 win over table toppers Marchwood Rangers.

Dear bagged his first goal in the opening 45 minutes, with Mitch Young on target for Rangers.

But as time ticked on it looked inevitable that the sides would take a point each before Dear slammed in a late goal with virtually the last kick of the game.

It wasn't so close as second placed AFC Southbrook destroyed Holbury United 7-0.

Ryan Longhurst hit a hat-trick, Mark Christopher struck twice, while Luke Jewell and Dion Bone got one each.

Carnival UK were 3-0 down at half-time but hit four in the second half to win 4-3 against Durley.

This mid-table battle threw up an epic comeback after Mike Cooper (2) and Owen Williams had given the home side a comfortable, and seemingly unassailable, lead at the break.

But they came back after Richard Bampton fired in a treble of goals and Sam Homewood got the other.

King George hit five past strugglers Otter Sunday in a 5-2 win.

HAT-TRICK

Mark Phillips netted a hat-trick, while David North and Michael Gough got one each. Mike Phillips and Ben Harris responded.

Shelfside leap-frogged Durley into third with 4-3 defeat of Easpoint.

Nathan Gray scored a hat-trick and Niall O'Connor bagged the other. Jamie Brennan and James Erskine (2) replied.

Hedge End Athletic are in the City of Southampton Sunday League Junior 3 driving seat after a 9-2 thrashing of Young Boys 93/4.

Athletic are now top on goal difference but have two games in hand against Trant in second.

Luke Faithful netted a hat-trick, while Dean Faithful and James Wood got one each.

Nick Turner and Dan Turner both hit a brace apiece. Braiden Hamilton and Charlie Hartup replied.

Trant stopped Hedge End going three points clear with a 5-0 demolition of Test Valley Spartans. Daniel Petley got two while Matthew Petley, Rikki Richardson and Carl Stead got one each.

Craig Mew hit a 25-yard scorcher for Chartwell Green Reserves, helping them to win 1-0 over bottom Fleming Sports.

And the spoils were shared between AFC Bishopstoke and AFC Velmore in a 2-2 draw. Dan Street netted twice for Velmore. Billy Woodbridge and Charlie Harris responded.

MORE SUNDAY FOOTBALL ON FACING PAGE

RANGE OF RESULTS

SAINTS were looking to do the double over QPR this season in the Premier League when the two sides meet at Loftus Road this weekend.

A lot has changed since Saints last travelled to face Rangers.

It was November 2012 when Nigel Adkins' men visited London for what turned out to be Mark Hughes's last game in charge of the hosts.

Saints, who had previously only won once in 11 top flight games in 2012/13, came away with a 3-1 win that led to Hughes getting the boot in the process.

Here the *Sports Pink* has charted all of Saints' league trips to QPR:

January 29, 1949

QPR 1 Saints 3

Saints, who finished third, moved to the top of Division 2 thanks to this victory. Charlie Wayman, top-scorer with 32 goals that term, hit the opener before Bill Ellerington made it 2-0 from the spot. George Curtis got the third late on.

August 27, 1949

QPR 1 Saints 0

Saints lost their third game on the bounce in an uninspired start to the 1949/50 campaign. They ended up fourth in the second tier.

March 23, 1951

QPR 2 Saints 0

For the second season running, Saints failed to score at Loftus Road.

This was Saints' second clash with Rangers in the space of three days, following a 2-2 draw at The Dell.

March 8, 1952

QPR 2 Saints 1

Rangers finished bottom of the second division but still managed to beat lower mid-table Saints.

Eric Day's header levelled for the visitors after Rangers had gone ahead in the opening minute, with the hosts winning it eight minutes from time.

September 7, 1953

QPR 0 Saints 1

Saints had just come off a poor season, having finished second to bottom and joining QPR in Division 3 South.

They bounced back from relegation well as they started the season by winning seven of their opening nine games, including this one. John Hoskins netted the only goal just past half hour. A week later Saints beat QPR 3-1 at The Dell.

October 9, 1954

QPR 2 Saints 2

Saints finished third and were in good form when they travelled to Loftus Road. John Flood levelled on 30 minutes before Tommy Mulgrew put Saints 2-1 up seven minutes later. Rangers equalised just past the hour.

August 27, 1955



GOAL: Grzegorz Rasiak, second left, heads Saints in front in their win in January 2007.



GOAL: Rickie Lambert gets a kick in the head in scoring at Loftus Road in November 2012.

QPR 4 Saints 0

Saints made up for this poor result by thrashing Rangers by the same deficit on Christmas Eve at The Dell.

September 22, 1956

QPR 1 Saints 2

New signing from Sunderland, Jimmy Shields, made an instant impact. He scored 18 goals that season, and notched his seventh and eight goals of the campaign here after Rangers had gone ahead.

January 18, 1958

QPR 3 Saint 2

Saints were 3-0 down by the 40th minute, and replied in the second half through John Sydenham and Don Roper.

Saints had thrashed QPR 5-0 at The Dell earlier that season.

November 8, 1958

QPR 2 Saints 2

Tommy Mulgrew levelled after QPR took the lead in the second minute. Charlie Livesey gave Saints the lead but Rangers pegged them

back with 13 minutes left.

March 26, 1960

QPR 0 Saints 1

Gordon Brown netted his second in three games in frenetic match to seal an important win.

Saints were crowned champions of Division 3, doing the double over Rangers in the process.

September 28, 1968

QPR 1 Saints 1

The sides met in the top-flight of English football for the first time.

FOLLOW SAINTS NEWS ONLINE AT WWW.DAILYECHO.CO.UK

Saints Spotlight

IN VISITS TO QPR



GOAL: Grzegorz Rasiak rises high to nod Saints in front in their 3-0 win in September 2007.



GOAL: Adam Lallana fires Saints' consolation in a 4-1 loss in September 2008.

Saints legend Terry Paine replied to a 45th minute Rangers goal. QPR only briefly flirted with Division 1 football, and got relegated at the end of that season. Saints finished seventh.

August 25, 1973 QPR 1 Saints 1

On the opening day of the 1973/74 season, Mick Channon, who went on to score 21 goals that season, hit a 69th minute leveller after QPR took the lead on the hour.

Saints beat QPR at The Dell the

following April, but they were relegated to Division 2 while Rangers finished in the top half.

February 24, 1979 QPR 0 Saints 1

Saints were back in Division 1 after finishing runners-up to Bolton Wanderers in the second tier.

Nick Holmes hit the only goal at Loftus Road and QPR were relegated at the end of the season.

March 24, 1984 QPR 4 Saints 0

During Saints' best ever top-flight season, this was a horrific blemish – their heaviest defeat of the season on a plastic pitch.

Saints were four down by the 64th minute.

February 2, 1985 QPR 0 Saints 4

Saints atoned for the previous season's loss by inflicting a 4-0 defeat on Rangers.

In the last of five meetings between the teams that season, Joe Jordan opened the scoring before

Danny Wallace, Dave Armstrong and Steve Moran completed the rout.

March 11, 1986 QPR 0 Saints 2

Twenty three minutes into his Saints debut, Stuart McManus, who made just two appearances for the club on a non-contract basis, netted the opener.

Glenn Cockerill doubled the lead. Saints did the double over QPR that season after a 3-0 win at The Dell.

January 24, 1987 QPR 2 Saints 1

Saints had thrashed QPR on the opening day of that season 5-1, but came January Chris Nicholl's men had not won in six games.

They continued that poor run in this one, Jimmy Case scoring the visitors' goal.

January 1, 1988 QPR 3 Saints 0

A poor defeat for Saints and, to make it worse, in their next game they lost 2-0 to arch-rivals Portsmouth at The Dell.

September 3, 1988 QPR 0 Saints 1

Saints legend Matthew Le Tissier netted the winner in a good start to the season for The Dell outfit – this their second of three straight wins at the start of term.

Saints lost 4-1 at home to Rangers in late December.

October 14, 1989 QPR 1 Saints 4

On club icon Jason Dodd's debut, Rod Wallace, who scored 18 goals for Saints that campaign netted twice, while Matt Le Tissier, the top-scorer with 20 that season, converted the spot.

Alan Shearer got the other.

February 23, 1991 QPR 2 Saints 1

Matt Le Tiss was on target again for Saints but Les Ferdinand, QPR's new director of football, scored a brace to secure the win.

September 7, 1991 QPR 2 Saints 2

Alan Shearer and Iain Dowie twice gave Saints the lead.

Saints went on to beat Rangers twice that season, first in the FA Cup and then in the league return fixture the following April.

August 19, 1992 QPR 3 Saints 1

In the first season of Premier League football, Matt Le Tiss slammed home to put Saints one up. They held on until the 57th minute when QPR hit back through Les Ferdinand's double and David Bardsley.

**CONTINUED ON
PAGE 27**

SUNDAY FOOTBALL

Clinical win for Itchen

JUNIOR 5, JUNIOR 6 & JUNIOR 7: Itchen Albion annihilated strugglers St Minions 11-0 in the City of Southampton Sunday League Junior 5.

Albion, who are hovering around the lower part of the division, were in a brutally clinical mood as Jamie Morton and James Shirley's hat-trick put the game well beyond Minions reach.

Josh Hughes scored a brace. Mike England and Tom Kemp scored one each to complete the demolition.

Dorchester Arms continued their title charge with a 6-1 win over bottom side Southampton Seahawks.

Joseph Clist (2), Segio Silva (2), Dan Jefferies and Matthew Whitman were all on target. Tom Phillips replied.

Sholing Monks kept the pressure on at the top of the table with a 4-0 win over Burrigade AFC. Ben Rowe and Ben Mather hit a brace apiece.

Curbridge defeated third from bottom Portside 4-0. James Pitre (2), Glenn Littleboy and James Drewery were on target.

Hunters Inn and Mottisfont both won to keep the Junior 6 title race well and truly alive.

BATTERED

Mottisfont, who have two games in hand over Hunters in second, battered AFC Spitfire 5-2.

Jason Gradidge hit a hat-trick and Jake Cornwell-Philpott and Matt Bosanquet hit one each.

Steve Pearce and Joey Harket-Burgess replied.

Meanwhile, Hunters beat Fawley RBL 5-1 through Ed Haycock, Ashley McGimpsey, Jack Solloway, Rob Pearce and Sam Draycott's goals. James Willis responded.

Bannister Park secured their first win of the season by beating Unity 2-1 through Murray Purves and Matthew Sellen's goals. Nasser Brora replied.

AFC Waterside maintained top spot in Junior 7 after Sean Parker bagged four goals in a 6-0 win over AFC Carnival.

Dean Lamb hit a brace to keep Waterside in their lofty position.

Cameron Roach hit his first of four goals 16 second into Portwood United Reserves' 7-1 demolition job of AFC Bishopstoke Reserves.

Roach was joined by Jermone O'Brien (2) and Chris Astridge on the score-sheet. Danny Wyatt scored a scarce consolation.

Elsewhere in the lowest rung of Southampton Sunday league, Woodside beat lowly Testwood Tornados 2-0. Ryan Frampton and Chris Broomfield were on target.

Meanwhile, Dorchester Manor scrapped past Chamberlayne Athletic Reserves 3-2. Aaron Fielder, Gary Klepp and Andy Riddell bagged one apiece for the third-placed outfit. Danny Kimber and Ricky Aldworth responded.

SEE MONDAY'S DAILY ECHO FOR MATCH REACTION AND PHOTOS

Girls and Ladies football round-up +++ Girls and Ladies football round-up

Pride at stake for Saints...

Southampton Saints U18s 0
Peterfield LFC U18s 0

IT WAS a friendly match yes, but pride was at stake as Saints, top of the Hampshire League, played Petersfield, unbeaten at the top of the North East Hants League.

Saints were at a major disadvantage straightaway, as they only had nine players, including one who had left her sick bed in order to help out. The weather conditions also were bad with a strong, freezing and blustery wind.

Saints set up their shape with three centre backs, four in midfield including two wingbacks, and one up top. The system worked a treat due to the hard work and clever reading of the game by the team who fought hard and kept their shape.

With Saints defending brilliantly, and Millie Peake excellent in goal, the final result was 0-0. Saints might even have won it, with several brilliant counter-attacks leading to goalscoring opportunities.

Peterfield LFC U13s 1
Southampton Saints U12s 3

ANOTHER freezing morning was no obstacle for Saints U12s as they moved into the Winchester & District League cup semi-finals against a resilient Petersfield team.

Saints dominated possession throughout and hit the woodwork on numerous occasions.

The deadlock was broken midway through the first half by the in form Larissa White, with a fine finish from the edge of the box.

Just before half-time Holly Jerrim scored a replica goal to give some daylight between the teams at the break.

A good passing move was rounded off by Lucy Nightingale in the second half and Saints seemed to be in for a comfortable end to the game.

A breakaway goal from Petersfield though was a timely reminder to not relax and keep playing until the end.

Final score 3-1 and the Saints move onto a semi final with Romsey.



ITCHEM LADIES: (from left): Nikki Keen, Payton Howard, Beckah Tonks, Meg Fox, Atlanta Primus. Front: Emma Whitlock, Dee Alo Llolo, Kiera Heslam, Kiera Gray.

Five-a-side champs

ITCHEM College are the new national Association of Colleges' South East regional 5-a-side champions.

They won the title in a high-scoring tournament at the Goals complex at Portsmouth College and will represent the South East region in the (AoC) finals weekend in Bath in late March.

The tournament attracted colleges from Hampshire, Surrey and Sussex, with teams being split into four groups.

Itchen won their group without losing a game, beating BHASVIC (Brighton) and Sussex Downs (Eastbourne) comfortably, before turning on the style in their final group game against a strong Chichester team.

As group winners, they faced Surrey side Strodes College in the quarter

final, and recovered from a slow start to win 7-4.

The semi-final tie against Farnborough and the final against hosts Portsmouth College saw a total of 20 goals, with scorelines of 6-2 and 7-5 respectively. The final itself was a very tight and entertaining affair, with the lead changing hands regularly, and the two teams never separated by more than two goals.

"It's the first time we've won the regional 5-a-side tournament, so we're really pleased," said coach Steve Perkins.

"The finals will be 7-a-side and on grass, so we'll need to think again about systems, but we've got some very talented girls so we'll be competitive."

KINGS' CUP RUN IS OVER

KING'S gallant run in the English Schools' Girls' Under-15 PlayStation Trophy is over – but they exited the competition with heads held high after a battling quarter-final defeat.

Didcot beat them 4-2, having twice repelled brave comebacks by the Winchester girls, *writes MIKE VIMPANY*

It's the third season in a row Didcot have knocked them out nationally. On the two previous occasions, they have gone on to lift the trophy at the Under-13 and Under-14 age groups.

Hot shot Molly Dyer, who hit hat-tricks in each of those Oxfordshire cup final successes, was again Didcot's match winner, scoring all four goals.

It was Dyer who gave Didcot the lead when Kings' were caught high up and pitch and she ran through to beat the advancing Emelia Halfpenny on a one-on-one situation.

And when Dyer thudded a 20-yard free kick into the top corner, the writing appeared on the wall for Kings'.



IMPRESSIVE: Goalscorer Stella Gandee-Maury in action

But that second Didcot goal coincided with school lunch-break and from a dozen or so parental supporters, the crowd swelled to several hundred, all munching healthy food packs - amid creating a terrific touchline din.

The support Kings' received and substantial rise in decibel level clearly rattled Didcot, who hung on for dear life as Stella Gandee Morgan saw a shot saved, Kate Williamson scraped the bar and then rattled the woodwork.

Somehow, they took a 2-0 interval lead into the break.

Kings' pressure eventually told – the impressive Stella bursting through the Didcot defence to send a rasping 20-yarder into roof of the net.

1-2: It's back in the balance, but the lunchtime bell rings aloud and sends Kings' vocal support back to the classroom - for an hour of algebra!

While they wrestled through a set of problematic quadratic equa-

tions and the touchline fell silent, so Dyer burst through again and Didcot restored their two-goal lead.

The tacky, muddy surface made it hard going, but to their credit Kings' – who had potted goals galore in the lead up to the quarter-finals – refused to lie down.

Awarded a somewhat fortuitous penalty for hand (elbow) ball, Kings' clawed it back to 3-2, with Stella Gandee Morgan spot kick too strong for the Didcot goalkeeper.

Alas, that was as good as it got for the Winchester girls, who conceded a fourth when Dyer squeezed a shot through the unfortunate goalkeeper's legs.

As Kings' pushed forward, so Didcot- and Dyer, in particular – could have stretched the lead beyond 4-2, but to be beaten by a wider margin would have been harsh and unfair for the local side who acquitted themselves well against a talented Didcot side.

Kings' squad: Emelia Halfpenny, Livvy Mattinson, Alice Nichols, Lauren Harper, Hannah Holloway, Molly Williams, Stella Gandee Morgan, Kate Wiseman, Sophie Gordon, Mary Strevens, Jaz Castle, Phoebe Williams, Natalie Davey and Suhaylah Jones.



THOMPSONS FC: Back row: Glynn Castle, Malcolm Davies snr (trainer), Calvin Grey, Floyd Bedwell, Tom Bannister, Matt Payne, John Traves, Ben Smith Jack Brazil (manager). Front row: Billy Hunt, Reece Meeke, Jacob Brazil, Malcolm Davies jnr, Gareth Spring, Billy Robinson Ian Shaw.

Up for the cup

SDFA SATURDAY JUNIOR B CUP FINAL
- Thompson v Upham
Res @ Totton & Eling
FC Wednesday,
February 11, 7.30pm

JUNIOR 4 leaders Thompsons face title rivals Upham Res in the first of the SDFA Cup finals.

Thompsons are favourites after defeating their rivals 3-0 in the league but cup finals are a great leveller.



UPHAM RES: Back Row from left to right: Lewis Dawkins, Ryan Cunningham, Stuart Creese, Alex Wingate, James Morgan, Ben Rowlett, Ashley Hughes. Front row left to right: Myles Lofthouse, George McEwan, Rob Pfeiffer, Chris Payne, Robby Dale, Reece Stafford, Richard Freeland.

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Youth Football

TOP TWO SET TO CLASH

LEAD pair South Downs and Itchen go head-to-head on Wednesday afternoon in a match certain to have a major bearing on the outcome of the Hampshire Sixth Form Colleges League championship.

The game – which looks like being played on Cosham's King George V ground, as opposed to South Downs' 4G surface atop Portsdown Hill – won't decide the title.

Barton Peveril and Brockenhurst have a lot of catching up with their fixtures, but are still very much in the frame, *writes MIKE VIMPANY*

Top placings:

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
South Downs	15	12	2	1	43	22	38
Itchen	13	11	1	1	52	13	34
Farnborough	13	9	2	2	49	23	29
Brockenhurst	9	8	1	0	74	7	25
Barton Peveril	9	8	0	1	38	8	24
Andover	10	7	0	3	38	11	21

South Downs and Itchen were both involved in five-goal results this week – but only James Taylor's side were winners.

While they cruised to a comfort-

able 5-0 win over Totton, South Downs came unstuck by the same scoreline against St Vincent.

The postponement of Gosport Borough's Football Conference Youth match in Oxford enabled St Vincent to field a far stronger side than they might normally in colleges fixtures.

Among their ranks was Curtis da Costa, who until recently was on Swindon Town's books and debuted, albeit briefly, in Gosport Borough's Hampshire Senior Cup victory over Winchester City last month. Da Costa was predictably influential in St Vincent's 5-0 win, initiated by a 30th minute strike by Elliot Roberts.

Scott Lovell got the second, and Liam Mears – a Conference Youth regular at Privett Park – the third before Kyle Kitson and Conner Johnson wrapped it up.

Itchen faced a similar situation when Chichester pitched up at Middle Road a few weeks ago with what amounted to their 'national' colleges side and won 4-0.

The perennial champions experi-



CURTIS DA COSTA

enced no such problems this week and cantered to a 5-0 win over Totton in the Middle Road mud.

A brace from Matt Casey and singles by Callum Williams, Matt Hubbard and a stunning individualist effort from Braydon Douglas completed the Itchen scoring.

Goal-happy Brockenhurst went to Basingstoke and beat Queen Mary's 7-3, with Jack Dixon and Harry Morgan each scoring twice.

It was 3-3 at one stage – QMC pair

Adam Alliston (2) and Nathan Maggs making things interesting – but Jack Hoey, Brandon Randall and Rhys Owen ensured the win.

A goal in each half by Sam Morgan and Will Wiseman, with a late header, gave Barton Peveril a 2-0 win over in-form Peter Symonds – a result which keeps the Eastleigh side firmly in contention. They host St Vincent at Chestnut Avenue on Wednesday.

Andover's game with Farnborough was postponed, while Poole Grammar trimmed Spasholt 2-0 win an Alex White penalty and a second from the pacy Alex Martin.

Bournemouth Grammar coach Andy Marsh was on Cloud 9 after watching his side win for the second week running.

A Chris Thompson double enabled them to beat Havant 2-0, while an Ollie Butler double improved Jordan Osborne's opener to give BGS a 3-1 win at Chichester.

Wednesday's fixtures: Alton v Bournemouth & Poole, Barton Peveril v St Vincent, Brockenhurst v Peter Symonds, Havant v Farnborough, QMC v Andover, Portsmouth v Chichester, South Downs v Itchen, Totton v Sparsholt.



TIP TOP: KES goalkeeper Matt Wear makes a fine fingertip save to deny Bay House from a corner. Pictures: Stuart Martin Order no: 32707878

Full list of SDFA events:

SDFA SATURDAY SENIOR CUP SEMI FINALS
- Hamble Club Res v Hamble Club @ Sholing FC Thursday 26th February 7.30pm
- Team Solent v AFC Stoneham @ Follands FC Wednesday 4th March 7.30pm

FINAL - ST MARY'S STADIUM - TBA

SDFA SATURDAY JUNIOR A CUP FINAL
- East Boldre v Woodlands @Totton & Eling FC Wednesday 1st April 7.30pm

SDFA SATURDAY JUNIOR B CUP FINAL
- Thompson v Upham Res @ Totton & Eling FC Wednesday 11th February 7.30pm

SDFA VETERANS FINAL

- Locksheath v Hythe Aztecs @ Follands FC Thursday 19th March 7.30pm

SDFA SUNDAY SENIOR FINAL
- Hamble Roll Call v AFC Bursledon & Sholing FC Tuesday 24th March 7.30pm

SDFA SUNDAY JUNIOR A CUP FINAL
@ Follands FC Sunday 3rd May 10.30am - Finalists not yet known

SDFA SUNDAY JUNIOR B CUP FINAL
@ FOLLANDS FC Sunday 3rd May 2pm - Finalists not yet known

SDFA WOMEN'S FINAL
- Southampton Saints v New Forest @ Test Park Thursday 12th March 7.30pm.

KES home in on cup final place...

WITH seven wins from their last nine matches, King Edward VI are homing in nicely on what will be their debut appearance in a Hampshire Sixth Form Colleges Cup final.

They play Andover in the 3rd XI Cup final at Test Park on March 18 and, on current form, will be optimistic of landing their first piece of county football silverware.

Primarily a hockey and rugby school in the winter months, KES only play soccer at sixth form level and they're currently enjoying one of their best seasons.

They lost their opening game 3-2 to Farnborough, but since then only runaway leaders Itchen – looking near certainties to lift the title after 12 straight wins – have beaten them.

KES have won nine times in the HCL – Harrison Mancey scoring 15 goals – besides enjoying success in the 3rd XI Cup, the most recent of which came in the shape of a penalty shoot-out win over Barton Peveril.

The teams fought out a goal-less draw in normal time, but KES won 7-6 after a dramatic spot kick finale.

Goalkeeper Matt Wear was the KES hero, saving the all-important seventh BP penalty when the contest went to sudden death.

KES enjoyed a ninth league win in midweek, beating Bay House 6-1, with Mancey scoring twice and Will Hawthorne, Will Scullard, Jake Storey and Elliott d'Souza also on target.

Andover earned their place in the 3rd XI Cup final when a Billy Stevens hat-trick set up a 4-0 win over Brockenhurst. Lee Mills got the opener.



OUCH! KES captain Casper Lacombe's boot appears to catch a Bay House defender Order no: 32707884

Boys face test

KINGS' of Winchester year ten boys face the biggest test of their fledgling careers when they take on Devonport High School in the seventh round of the English Schools' FA Under-15 PlayStation Trophy on Tuesday.

The tie is scheduled to take place at Kings' Romsey Road ground, with a noon kick off, but if the pitch is unfit, it will be switched to the Southampton Solent University 3G surface at Test Park, 3pm.

The Kings' squad is: Alfie Glover, Dan Holt, Kanya Mtshweni, Jonny Philipson, Charlie Wallbridge, Alejandro Arguillas, Jack Down, Ben Parkinson, Connor Nolan, James Pike, Joe Sutherland, Oli Hall, Will Thompson, Mark MacAuley, Joe Maybe, Nick Doubell.

FROM PAGE 27

August 21, 1993

QPR 2 Saints 1

Saints met QPR early in the season for the third consecutive campaign. Ian Branfoot's side were undone by Rangers and were 2-0 down for much of the second half before Iain Dowie volleyed in a late consolation.

Saints then lost to QPR at The Dell 1-0 that December.

December 28, 1994

QPR 2 Saints 2

Saints came from behind twice through Jim Magilton and David Hughes's acrobatic scissor kick.

Saints went on to finish 10th and beat Rangers 2-1 at The Dell.

March 30, 1996

QPR 3 Saints 0

It was a torrid season for both clubs. Saints narrowly avoided relegation – finishing fourth-from-bottom – and QPR dropped into the second tier. Rs' relegation saw an end to any clashes with Saints for almost ten years.

January 14, 2006

QPR 1 Saints 0

Saints had begun their spell in the wilderness after relegation from the Premier League the season before under the management of recently departed Rangers boss Harry Redknapp.

QPR were seriously struggling in the Championships and only narrowly avoided relegation to the third tier that season.

Richard Langley gave Rs the win in what turned out to be Theo Walcott's last Saints appearance.

January 20, 2007

QPR 0 Saints 2 (Rasiak, Wright-Phillips)

In their second season in the Championship, Polish striker Grzegorz Rasiak and Bradley Wright-Phillips – who is now at New York Red Bulls – found the net. Saints finished sixth and reached the play-offs but lost to Derby County on penalties.

QPR ended up 18th.

September 1, 2007

QPR 0 Saints 3

Grzegorz Rasiak enjoyed more success in front of goal at Loftus Road, scoring twice before half time. Bradley Wright-Phillips replicated his antics of the previous season by hitting a goal of his own.

September 14, 2008

QPR 4 Saints 1 (Lallana)

The abyss of the third tier loomed for Saints as financial strains limited progress in the Championship and relegation eventually came.

Saints were well beaten at Loftus Road with ex-Saint Dexter Blackstock scoring a brace.

Adam Lallana replied with his only league goal of the season.

November 17, 2012

QPR 1 Saints 3

QPR avoided relegation to the Championship on the last day of the previous season, but they weren't so lucky this season as they finished rock-bottom of the top-flight.

Saints, on the other hand, were back in the Premier League for the first time in seven seasons, and finished 14th.

The two sides met with Saints without a win in seven games and Rangers amidst a run of 15 games without victory.

Rickie Lambert scored his fifth goal of the season, while Jason Puncheon got his third before Anton Ferdinand's own goal sealed Saints' victory.

COUNTY BACKING YOUNG ATHLETES - SEE PAGES 44 & 45

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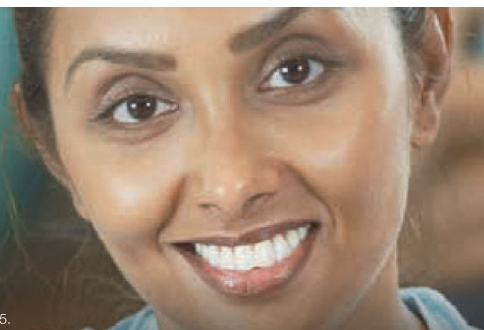


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RESULTS



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2015
Names of winners will be published on
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or
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Hampshire Cricket Spotlight

BOOK of the WEEK

The Breakaway
My Story
By Nicole Cooke

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IN A week when Lance Armstrong surfaced in a series of stage-managed TV interviews, stealthily manoeuvring into a position that could conceivably see his lifetime cycling ban lifted, it seems appropriate to consider cycling's considerably more acceptable side in the form of Nicole Cooke's outstanding autobiography.

Nicole Cooke is the very antithesis of everything Lance Armstrong was and stands for. She remains the only rider ever to have become World and Olympic champion in the same year. She was also the first British cyclist to achieve the rank of world number one, although frustratingly, for her and legions of cycling fans who appreciated the significance of her achievement, it was a status that delivered little in terms of either media profile or wealth.

Prior to the mid-noughties, cycling was still deemed a minority sport, considered an almost exclusively male preserve, its reputation tarnished by widespread accusations of drug-taking. As a woman in a man's sport, Cooke's achievements were, as a consequence, overlooked and while she's not bitter about this, she certainly believes more could have been done by the people running the sport to promote it more effectively.

This is where Cooke really opens up; there are plenty of sporting biographies described as 'frank and outspoken', but very few actually live up to the jacket cover hype. *The Breakaway* is different.

Cooke is generous in her praise for those who helped her career, but she pulls no punches when naming others, often those in positions of authority, who she considers either stupid, incompetent, or downright malevolent. What makes Cooke's criticism effective is her willingness to acknowledge the times when she was wrong.

Yet *The Breakaway* is no diatribe. At its heart, it is a compelling tale of sporting ambition and determination which resulted in Cooke becoming one of Britain's greatest-ever cyclists.

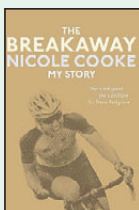
First published in hardback last year, *The Breakaway* will appear in paperback format later this month – around the time that Armstrong will learn whether he can get officially back on his bike. Sports fans should buy this book in order to read the story of a female rider who loves cycling with a passion, not someone who now considers it a means to an end.

QUIZ QUESTION:

We've teamed up with Sports Book of the Month and have a copy of *The Breakaway* to give away.

To win this week's sports book, go to their website (sportsbookofthemonth.com) and answer the following question:

In which country was Nicole Cooke born?



IS ENGLAND READY FOR

Carbs' Big success highlights need for change

THE Southampton Stars against London Lightning at a packed Ageas Bowl to decide the inaugural English Premier League.

Could this really become a reality in the next few years?

For many of those hooked on the thrill-fest that was this year's Big Bash, the Australian T20 tournament won by a Perth Scorchers side including Hampshire duo Michael Carberry and Yasir Arafat, it is the sort of fixture needed to reinvigorate domestic cricket.

Carbs will no doubt find Hampshire's opening T20 Blast game against the Essex Eagles a little anti-climactic after the razzmatazz of the Big Bash.

After introducing one-day cricket to the world in 1963 and the Twenty20 format 40 years later, the consensus is that English cricket has been left behind over the last decade.

So what is wrong with the domestic T20 format as it stands?

It has been evolving since its inception but not necessarily for the better.

Originally, it consisted of three groups of six, with five group games. The winners qualified for Finals Day along with the best runners-up.

DEAD RUBBERS

Two years later, in 2005, the quarter-final stage was introduced and in 2006 each county played an extra three group games.

By 2008 there were a total of ten group games, ensuring the teams played each other home and away.

But that was not enough for the organisers of the rebranded Friends Life T20 in 2010, which insisted on no fewer than 16 group games across just two groups (north and south).

The result?

A plethora of dead rubbers (although that tournament is remembered for the best final in the competition's history – Hampshire's last-ball success



"We should not feel inferior, to the rest of the world. We are more than capable of repackaging the game we invented once again"

COMMENT

Simon Walter

simon.walter@dailyecho.co.uk

CRICKET REPORTER



against Somerset at the Rose Bowl). At this point the goose that laid the golden egg was feeling very poorly indeed.

So in 2012 and 2013 the Friends Life t20 reverted to the 2008/09 Twenty20 Cup format, with three groups of six playing ten games.

Then, last year, the competition was rebranded as the T20 Blast.

We were back to two groups of nine playing a nonsensical 14 games (so counties play six, but not two, of

their rival counties home and away) with the appointment-view introduction of regular Friday night cricket – meaning the earlier-than-ever start to a T20 tournament of May 16.

We will have the same imbalance this season with Hampshire playing Surrey and Gloucestershire just once, in the midst of home and away fixtures against the south group's other counties.

But with ECB chairman Giles Clarke set to be replaced by Yorkshire's Colin Graves, hopes are high in certain quarters that a root-and-branch review of the English game will pave the way for a city-based T20 League built on the same model as the Indian Premier League and the Big Bash.

Should the IPL and the BBL be replicated, it would mean eight

franchises playing each other home and away in a one-division league format, with the top four contesting the semi-finals and final.

Like the BBL, which has eight city sides instead of the six states that compete in the first-class Sheffield Shield, an EPL would almost certainly mean a breakaway from the traditional 18-county format.

MID-SEASON BREAK

The Sheffield Shield will resume next week after a two-month hiatus for Victoria, Western Australia, Tasmania, New South Wales, South Australia, Queensland.

It is probable that any plans for an EPL would see the counties have a similar mid-season break.

Fast forward to June 2017 and instead of the County

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Hampshire Cricket Spotlight

A FRANCHISE T20?

CHAMPS: Hampshire's Michael Carberry, left, and Yasir Arafat, fourth left, celebrate victory in the Big Bash final with their Perth Scorchers teammates.



Championship scores we may have matches between the likes of the London Lions (based at Lord's/The Oval), Birmingham Bears (Edgbaston), Newcastle Strikers (Riverside), Southampton Stars (Ageas Bowl), Manchester Mavericks (Old Trafford), Cardiff Dragons (Swalec Stadium), Leeds Lightning (Old Trafford) and the Nottingham Outlaws (Trent Bridge).

Does that set your pulses racing?

In some ways this is simply a reinvention of



ROD BRANSGROVE: Hampshire chairman backs the idea of a three-division county championship.

the wheel. It would bring us back full circle to the early years of the Twenty20 Cup, with no quarter-final stage and only seven group games (why the eight BBL teams play eight pool matches is beyond me).

It is the marketing of the BBL that makes it so successful, along with the interactivity of the televised experience.

For some reason, people find it easier to relate to their nearest city (Perth Scorchers, Melbourne Renegades, Melbourne Stars, Sydney Sixers, Sydney Thunder, Hobart Hurricanes, Adelaide Strikers and Brisbane Heat) than their state.

So much so that the average Big Bash crowd is 23,000 (the T20 Blast averages crowds of about 5,200).

What players want most of all is

the opportunity to play in front of big crowds and, ultimately, it is bums on seats that the suits are after.

It is true that more overseas players would be able to play if the competition was condensed into one month instead of three (again, a return to the original 2003 format).

But would more big names, cities instead of the shires and the reduction of 18 teams to eight make that much difference?

Possibly. We would probably have bigger crowds although I find it hard to believe that we would average anywhere near 20,000 (the capacities of our cricket stadia are not much more than this).

You never know 'til you try, but we know from experience that scheduling the games in a shorter time period increases the chance of a wet spell ruining the tournament (the Australian climate has also contributed to the success of the Big Bash).

When it comes to the logistics of squeezing another competition into the calendar, I agree with Hampshire chairman Rod Bransgrove and director of cricket Giles White, who believe the County Championship should become three divisions of six instead of two of nine.

That would free up enough days and should also increase the intensity of the first class/four-day matches with more preparation/rest time improving the quality.

TERRESTRIAL TELEVISION

But I am also of the belief that showing the current T20 competition on terrestrial television would do more to improve cricket's popularity than any changes to the structure (it is no coincidence that cricket participation has been on a steady decline since 2005 – the year England's home Tests left our screens for Sky).

That is not to say there should not be changes but all options should be considered. We should not go down the copycat route for the sake of it.

What works in India and Australia does not necessarily work over here.

We should not feel inferior, to the rest of the world. We are more than capable of repackaging the game we invented once again.

I like the idea, tweeted earlier this month by Michael Vaughan, of turning the current T20 competition into an FA Cup-style knockout including clubs and minor counties.

How about this alongside a Europe-wide T20 comp to include the likes of the Glasgow Gladiators and the Amsterdam Aces, but screened on freeview channels instead of Sky.

Not the most lucrative option perhaps, but broadening its reach is in English cricket's best long-term interests.

Did You Know?

ROGER Federer suspected he was stung by a bee during his recent win over Simone Bolelli at the Australian Open.

Here, the *Sports Pink* looks at other incidents where animals have caused problems for sportsmen.

PABLO LARRAZABAL'S encounter with stinging insects was rather more dramatic than Federer's.

The Spaniard, pictured below, was playing at the Malaysian Open last year when he was suddenly attacked by a swarm of hornets. He was stung more than 20 times and escaped by jumping into a nearby lake.

"They were three times the size of bees," said Larrazabal. "I didn't know what to do. My caddie told me to run so I start running like a crazy guy, but the hornets were still there, so the other players told me to jump in the lake. It was the scariest moment of my career."

Remarkably, Larrazabal climbed out of the lake and made a birdie.



ENGLAND'S quarter-final against Brazil at the 1962 World Cup had to be halted by a canine invasion a few minutes into the match.

Brazilians Gilmar and Garrincha failed to stop the dog, but Jimmy Greaves got down on all fours and grabbed hold of it. The dog left its mark, though, by urinating all over the England striker. Legend has it Garrincha found the incident so funny he adopted the dog.

The Tour de France has seen plenty of animal incursions over the years. One of the most famous of recent times came in 2007 when German cyclist **MARCUS BURGHARDT** was unable to avoid a labrador that had ambled into the road.

Burghardt went over his handlebars and lay on the road while the bemused-looking dog got to its feet and wandered off. Both animal and rider emerged relatively unscathed. In 2010, meanwhile, the peloton had to stop to allow a flock of sheep to cross their path.

American golfer **STEVE LOWERY** was feeling rather pleased with himself at The Players Championship in 1998 after hitting an excellent approach shot to the island green on the 17th hole.

But he then had to watch helplessly as a seagull picked up the ball and dropped it into the water. Fortunately for Lowery, the rules allowed him to replace the ball with no penalty.

A Swiss Super League match between FC Thun and Zurich was interrupted in 2013 when a pine marten ran on to the pitch.

Zurich's **LORIS BENITO** showed reflexes as a goalkeeper would be proud of to perform a diving catch on the animal and was bitten on the finger for his troubles.

Deportivo Pereira defender **LUIS MORENO** had only himself to blame for the animal incident that brought him notoriety.

During a Colombian league match in 2011 between Deportivo and Atletico Junior, Atletico's owl mascot flew onto the pitch and was struck by the ball.

While officials debated what to do with the stunned bird, Moreno kicked it off the pitch. The owl was taken to a veterinary centre but later died from shock.

Panama international Moreno apologised to the "whole Colombian nation" after receiving death threats. He was subsequently banned for two matches, fined and ordered to do community service at a zoo.

CALL CRICKET WRITER SIMON WALTER ON 023 8042 4482

Did You Know?

TEN CRICKET CRICKET WORLD CUP FACTS

WITH the World Cup getting under way in Australia and New Zealand next week, the Sports Pink looks at ten facts from either past competitions or the forthcoming edition:

1) England's failure to emerge victorious in any of the TEN stagings of the tournament is notorious although only five countries have lifted the trophy. Australia (1987, 1999, 2003 and 2007) are the most successful with four wins, West Indies (1975 and 1979) and India (1983 and 2011) have each bagged a brace, while Pakistan (1992) and Sri Lanka (1996) hold one victory each.

2) England held the first three tournaments and since then the competition has been shared round the Test-playing nations.

Apart from 1999 and 2007, when England and West Indies were the respective sole hosts, two or even three nations in close proximity to each other have shared the duties. England will host the next edition in 2019, with India being awarded the 2023 competition.

3) Australia, England, India, New Zealand, Pakistan, Sri Lanka and West Indies are the only teams to have played every single edition of the tournament.

Zimbabwe have competed in all but the first two events while South Africa have played from 1992 onwards after being accepted back as a Test nation the previous year. Afghanistan will take part for the first time this year after getting through qualifying.

4) Former India batsman Sachin Tendulkar, right, is the leading run-scorer with 2,278 across six competitions from 1992-2011, while ex-Australia seamer Glenn McGrath has taken the most wickets with 71 scalps in four events from 1996-2007.



5) East Africa was the eighth participant at the very first tournament in 1975. The cricket team representing Kenya, Uganda, Tanzania and Zambia have never featured again. Namibia (2003) and Bermuda (2007) are the other teams to have only played in one edition while the United Arab Emirates will take part in their second competition this year, having previously played in 1996.

6) The winners of this event will receive just under four million US dollars, with the runners-up getting US 1.975million. Four years ago, India were awarded US 3million while Sri Lanka were given US 1.5million.

7) Melbourne, Sydney, Adelaide, Brisbane, Perth, Hobart and Canberra are the Australian venues this year, while matches in New Zealand will be held at Auckland, Wellington, Napier, Christchurch, Hamilton, Dunedin and Nelson. England will split their time between the two countries, with three Pool A matches each in Australia and New Zealand.

8) Anderson Cummins (West Indies and Canada), Kepler Wessels (Australia and South Africa) and Ed Joyce and Eoin Morgan (both Ireland and England) are the four players to have represented two different countries.

9) Only the FIFA World Cup and Summer Olympics receive larger coverage than cricket's global extravaganza. It is televised in more than 200 countries to more than two billion television viewers.

10) Since 1992, a man of the tournament award has been given at the end of each finals. Martin Crowe, Sanath Jayasuriya, Lance Klusener, Tendulkar, McGrath and Yuvraj Singh, above, have each won the prestigious award.



COMMENT

Simon Walter

simon.walter@dailyecho.co.uk

CRICKET REPORTER



THE Cricket World Cup gets under way on Valentine's Day but I am one of many who has fallen out of love with the tournament.

Granted, it has provided some wonderful moments and lasting memories but its format continues to confuse and frustrate.

Unlike its football equivalent, which has remained the same for the last five editions – eight groups of four followed by a knockout stage that begins with the round-of-16 – the Cricket World Cup is in a constant state of flux.

The 2015 edition gets off to a mouth-watering start with England against Australia in Melbourne (New Zealand v Sri Lanka begins in Christchurch a few hours earlier) but we have a month of group matches, most of which will be irrelevant in deciding the eventual winner.

SHOCK

There is sure to be the odd shock result but the league format means it would be a major surprise if any of the smaller nations was to break into the quarter-finals – which begin more than a month after the opening game.

Australia, New Zealand, Sri Lanka and England are the clear favourites to qualify from Pool A. Bangladesh will be determined to have a say but Scotland and Afghanistan are there to make up the numbers.

And Pakistan, India, South Africa and West Indies should qualify at the expense of Ireland, UAE and Zimbabwe from Pool B.

I have no problem with the smaller countries taking part. In fact I would prefer four groups of four – as was the case in 2007 – but with the quarter-finals that have been reintroduced this year instead of the 'Super Eights'.

That way there are less dead rubbers, the biggest turn-off for any sports fan.

A Test Championship would be a better way to decide the globe's best cricket nation, but logistically that is much more difficult to get right.

With the 50-over format, however, the ICC has no excuse.

Maybe I have also become disillusioned with the World Cup because of England's continual failures.

I still remember smuggling a transistor radio into my science class to listen to England's World Cup final defeat against Pakistan in 1992 (we lost despite the best efforts of Neil Fairbrother and Derek Pringle).

Incidentally, next week's big game will be England's first World Cup match at the Melbourne Cricket Ground since that 22-run defeat.

Hopefully this will be our best World Cup performance since then.

It will not be difficult – England

FORMAT FIDDLING AND ENGLAND FAILURES HAVE TAKEN AWAY CUP'S SPARK

I still remember smuggling a transistor radio into my science class to listen to England's World Cup final defeat against Pakistan in 1992

CUP DOUBLE: Gordon Greenidge and, inset, James Vince – a key player in 2019?



have not reached the semi-finals since 1992.

There will be no Hampshire involvement at this World Cup but it has not been a particularly happy tournament for the county since Gordon Greenidge won the first two editions with the West Indies in 1975 and 1979.

Trevor Jesty failed to get a game despite being included in England's 1983 squad, when Greenidge was a losing finalist.

And Kevin Pietersen, in 2007, is the only Hampshire player to

have represented England at a World Cup since Robin Smith in 1992.

HARDEST DECISION

But even Smith missed out on playing in the World Cup final, despite recovering from injury, with Graham Gooch preferring to stick with Allan Lamb in what he described as the hardest decision he had ever had to make.

And England's quarter-final defeat to eventual winners Sri

Lanka in 1996 was one of the last international appearances of Smith's career – a miserable way to end it.

More recently, Shane Warne's return to Hampshire as captain was delayed when he tested positive for a banned diuretic in the build-up to the 2003 World Cup.

Had this World Cup been played last year Michael Carberry would have been in contention for a squad place but James Vince should be a key player in 2019...

CUP SPECIAL -- CRICKET WORLD CUP SPECIAL --

ENGLAND captain Eoin Morgan believes the growing debate over the size of modern bats is "absolutely ridiculous" as the International Cricket Council considers a clampdown.

ICC chief executive Dave Richardson suggested earlier this week that lawmakers could look to reduce the size of bats – most significantly their depth – amid fears the balance of the game has shifted too far towards batsmen.

A host of batting records have fallen in the recent past – with more expected to fall at the Cricket World Cup, South Africa's AB de Villiers clubbing the fastest one-day century, from 31 balls, last month while India opener Rohit Sharma hit a record 264 in November last year.

Morgan, however, thinks those blaming bat sizes are missing the point.

Instead the 28-year-old believes recent rule changes in the 50-over format have conspired to boost scoring with the move to allow a maximum of four fielders outside the ring at any point, plus the use of two new balls, more likely factors.

"I think it is ridiculous, absolutely ridiculous," he said.

"The fact that you can concentrate on the bat size when the rule change has been made so that you bowl with two new balls – the ball is never any older than 25 overs and you have an extra man in the circle.

"I think that is a point in itself. The bat size (debate) is ridiculous."

REGULATED

At present the length and width of the bats is regulated, but the depth has become the talking point as manufacturers have developed new ways to increase the size of the 'sweet spot'.

Last year a report commissioned by the Marylebone Cricket Club – the lawmakers of the game – found the thickness of edges on modern bats had increased 300 per cent and in turn the 'sweet spot' has grown two-and-a-half times larger.

Those figures have led Richardson to suggest the laws should at least be reviewed.

Only last July the MCC's World Cricket Committee – which features former Australia skipper Steve Waugh – elected not to change the rules regarding bat sizes.

Australia opener David Warner and West Indies' Chris Gayle are two players who have come into focus for the size of their bats but Morgan, a batsman himself, has not felt any unfair advantage has been gained.

"I haven't come across a bat yet where I've said: 'This is ridiculous, this should be outlawed,'" he added.

Morgan was speaking in Sydney, where England have assembled for the final part of their World Cup preparations, and was equally bullish when asked to assess his side's chances of lifting the World Cup for the first time.

"We're here to win the World Cup. That's the bottom line," he said.

"Like every other team we're



BAT DEBATE 'RIDICULOUS' – MORGAN

here to get the best out of ourselves and us at our best we can win this World Cup.

"It is certainly the most talented squad I've ever been a part of."

WRITTEN OFF

England's World Cup hopes had been written off by many even before they arrived in Australia last month for the Tri-Series, when they defied expectation to

reach the final.

Twice they convincingly beat world champions India, although any growing belief was tempered with a third successive defeat to Australia in last week's final at the WACA Ground.

Morgan's men relinquished a winning position in Perth, just as they had in Hobart in the previous game, and while the captain knows performances must be turned into wins there is reason to

EOIN MORGAN: Believes recent rule changes have boosted scoring in the 50-over format rather than bigger bat sizes.

believe they are closing the gap on the top sides.

"We're in good shape. We've had a very productive month or so," Morgan added.

"We have got a lot out of playing against good opposition, particularly the games we've played against Australia.

"We've covered a lot of bases, probably more so than I thought we would be in this position."

Morgan concedes one area of minor concern is his own form.

After hitting a century against Australia in the Tri-Series opener the left-hander has twice suffered first-ball dismissals and admits he would have liked to have played a match-winning hand.

"That's a big emphasis on the team and we've done that so far," he said.

"I've not done it yet, which has been disappointing but I think I'm in a good place and a good head space for where we are at the moment."

CRICKET WORLD CUP TALKING POINTS

THE *Sports Pink* assesses the main issue facing each of the leading teams at the World Cup.

HOW WILL MICHAEL CLARKE'S FITNESS BATTLE AFFECT AUSTRALIA?

The co-hosts' captain tore his right hamstring last month and is desperately trying to recover in time to play a meaningful role in the tournament. He has all but written off their opening game against England but game two against Bangladesh is the target, and his comeback began with a half-century for his Grade side Western Suburbs. Steve Smith's, right, form in deputising as skipper has been superb – in all formats – helping to minimise disruption from the uncertainty over Clarke but the older man's leadership, which was on full display in the aftermath of Phillip Hughes' tragic death, would be a significant boost to the green and gold.



CAN SOUTH AFRICA FINALLY SHED THE 'CHOKERS' TAG?

Ever since the 1999 semi-final, when Lance Klusener battered the Proteas level with Australia's score with four balls remaining only for the shambolic run-out of Allan Donald to cost them a place in the final, South Africa have been dogged by a reputation for coming up short when it matters most.

They got their Duckworth-Lewis sums wrong to exit at the group stage as hosts in 2003, crumbled in the 2007 semi-final and failed to chase 222 last time out. They have also come up short in the World Twenty20 and their results simply do not do justice to the talent in their ranks. Can they turn the corner under AB de Villiers' captaincy?

HAVE ENGLAND FOUND THE RIGHT BLEND IN THE TOP ORDER?

The emergence of Moeen Ali, below, has helped Peter Moores balance his side, with the Worcestershire man's batting and off-spin allowing for both a full-strength seam selection and a strong batting line-up.

This has been especially apparent with his dynamic showings at the top of the order in white-ball cricket and Ian Bell's Tri-Series form has helped him nail down the other opening spot, ahead of Twenty20 specialist Alex Hales and with Test captain Alastair

Cook removed from the one-day picture.

With James Taylor and Joe Root also establishing themselves, England have the ability to set good platforms for their belligerent middle order of new captain Eoin Morgan, Ravi Bopara and Jos Buttler. Have they finally cracked a perennial problem?

CAN INDIA GET TO GRIPS WITH AUSTRALIAN CONDITIONS?

Indications from the pre-tournament Tri-Series against Australia and England do not offer encouragement.

India lost all of their completed games, were bowled out for 153 and 200 against England and took only 14 wickets in three innings.

Even the positives from the series serve only to reflect a historic trend – Ajinkya Rahane and Shikhar Dhawan's stand of 83 against England second time around was the best by an Indian opening pair at the WACA Ground by a clear 20 runs. They have the talent but must overcome the weight of history if they are to succeed this time around.

A LAST HURRAH FOR 'SANGAWARDENE'?

Sri Lanka's batting stalwarts Kumar Sangakkara, below, and Mahela Jayawardene will be playing in their last global tournament, with the latter retiring from international cricket altogether while Sangakkara considers playing on in Tests only.

Their 5,898 runs as a partnership is the second best mark in ODIs, behind only India pair Sachin Tendulkar and Sourav Ganguly, and they have made 15 century stands and 31 more over 50 in 147 innings together.

Both are in the top five ODI run-scorers in history, with over 26,000 between them, and it goes without saying they will leave a huge void. Can their team help them to a glorious farewell Down Under?



SEE PAGES 38, 39 & 42 FOR MORE CRICKET WORLD CUP COVERAGE

Cricket
StatsSIX OF THE BEST
WORLD CUP MATCHES

ENGLAND beat India by 202 runs in the first World Cup match at Lord's in June 1975. Here, the Sports Pink looks at six of the best World Cup battles in the intervening 40 years:

FINAL, JUNE 21 1975, LORD'S
WEST INDIES BEAT
AUSTRALIA BY 17 RUNS

The indomitable West Indies held on to become the first world champions in a Lord's thriller which ended at 8.45pm on a balmy evening. Windies captain Clive Lloyd led by example with a thunderous 102 to set the Aussies a stiff target of 292. Australia raced to 81 for one in reply but then spectacularly contributed to their own downfall with five run-outs. Jeff Thomson and Dennis Lillee revived hopes with a last-wicket stand of 41, but – inevitably – poor running ended their resistance with eight balls remaining.

FINAL, JUNE 25 1983, LORD'S
INDIA BEAT WEST INDIES BY
43 RUNS

India dethroned back-to-back champions West Indies with a stunning fightback in a low-scoring match with historic consequences. India had seemed beaten as they were bowled out for just 183, but West Indian complacency then set in. Madan Lal sparked a collapse with three quick wickets, and the favourites dramatically slumped to 66 for six. Jeff Dujon and Malcolm Marshall, pictured, threatened to turn things around, but Mohinder Amarnath removed them both to spark Indian celebrations – and embolden the national psyche to spawn the modern superpower of world cricket.

SEMI-FINAL, MARCH 14 1996,
CHANDIGARH - AUSTRALIA
BEAT WEST INDIES BY FIVE
RUNS

Victory over New Zealand in a high-scoring quarter-final, followed by a long journey to north India, looked to have taken its toll on Australia as the West Indies, rejuvenated after a shock loss to Kenya, closed in on a place in the final. The Aussies slipped to 15 for four – and although they recovered to set a target of 208, the Windies looked to have their measure. Richie Richardson and Shivnarine Chanderpaul were in complete control until the latter's dismissal sparked a dramatic collapse of eight quick wickets. Richardson could still have won the game with 10 needed in the last over – but instead of giving his captain the strike, last man Courtney Walsh aimed a wild heave and was bowled.

● Continued on facing page.

CRICKET WORLD CUP SPECIAL -- CRICKET WORLD

WORLD CUP STAGE

THE Cricket World Cup gets under way in Australia and New Zealand this coming Saturday. Here the Sports Pink takes a look back at England's history in the tournament...

1975

England took part in one of the most bizarre one day matches in history when they made their World Cup bow.

In their first group game against India at Lord's, Dennis Amiss smashed 137 and Keith Fletcher added 68 as England rattled up 334-4 off their 60 overs.

In reply, Indian opener Sunil Gavaskar batted throughout the 60 overs for 36 not out, scored off 174 balls, as his side crept to 132-3.

Geoff Arnold conceded just 20 runs off his ten overs, while Chris Old conceded only 26. England sent down 12 maidens, a figure inconceivable nowadays.

Fletcher struck 131 as England defeated New Zealand by 80 runs in their next game.

And Mike Denness' men made it three group wins out of three when they thrashed East Africa by 196 runs.

Amiss (88) and Barry Wood (77) put on 158 for the first wicket, before John Snow returned figures of 12-6-11-4 as East Africa were skittled for 94 (John Lever 3-32).

England faced Australia in a thrilling, low scoring semi final at Headingley.

Gary Gilmour was virtually unplayable, returning 12-6-14-6 as the hosts were routed for just 93 - England were 52-8 at one stage.

In reply, Australia dipped to 39-6 before Gilmour walked to the crease at No 8 and promptly smashed an unbeaten 28 off as many balls to give his side a four wicket success.

West Indies captain Clive Lloyd led from the front in the first World Cup final, hammering 102 from 85 balls in his side's 17-run victory.

The Australian reply was marked by top-order batsmen being run out when going for runs after misfields.

A total of five of their team were run out, three by Viv Richards.

1979

There were no semi finals when the second World Cup was held four years later, again

in England. The winners of the two four-team groups went straight through to the Lord's final.

England started with a routine win over minnows Canada, who were skittled for just 45 at Old Trafford with Chris Old returning 10-5-8-4 and Bob Willis bagging 4-11.

England slipped to 11-2 in reply but won by eight wickets.

Skipper Mike Brearley then led England to two narrow victories over Pakistan and New Zealand.

They were dismissed for 165 against Pakistan at Headingley, but the visitors

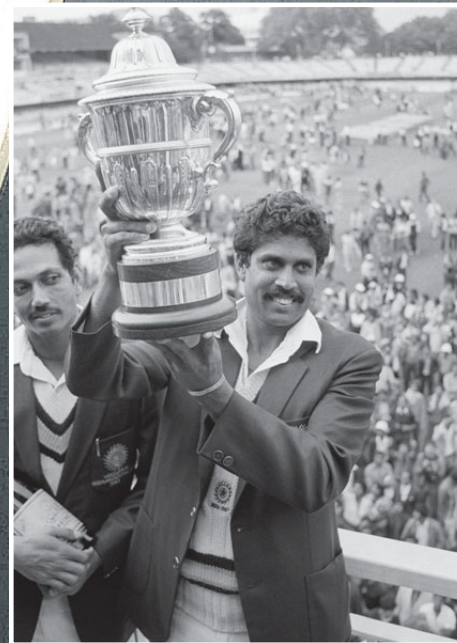
were all out for 151 - that after they had been reduced to 34-6 by Mike Hendrick (4-15).

Graham Gooch top scored with 71 as England posted 221-8 against the Kiwis at Old Trafford. New Zealand could only manage 212-9 in reply.

The West Indies retained the World Cup thanks to their two Somerset stars.

First, Viv Richards hammered an imperious unbeaten 138 as the Caribbean kings rattled up 286-9.

England reached 183-3 in reply but then lost their last



WORLD CLASS: Kapil Dev, captain of India, holds the World Cup trophy aloft after beating the West Indies in the 1983 final and, main pic, Kevin Pietersen.

seven wickets for just 11 runs.

Giant seamer Joel Garner was chief destroyer, taking 5-38 including clean bowling Graham Gooch, David Gower, Wayne Larkins and Chris Old in the process.

1983

A change of format for the third World Cup, which as with the first two was held in England.

CUP SPECIAL -- CRICKET WORLD CUP SPECIAL --

SET FOR ENGLAND

England will have to overcome a not so glorious history to triumph at the Cricket World Cup



Each country in the two four-team qualifying groups played each other twice, with the top two in the group progressing to the semi-finals.

England were drawn against Sri Lanka, Pakistan and New Zealand, winning five of their six games.

Highlight was ex-Hampshire star David Gower hitting 130 against Sri Lanka at Taunton.

Local hero Ian Botham was run out for a duck, after facing just one ball, but another Somerset man, off-spinner Vic Marks, bagged career best ODI figures of 5-39 in England's 47-run win.

Opener Graeme Fowler was in fine form, hitting 81 in the return victory against Sri Lanka and also scoring 78 and 69 in two successes against Pakistan.

England's sole loss was a two-wicket defeat to New Zealand after they had posted 234.

The host nation were favourites to reach their second successive final, but suffered a surprise semi-final loss to India.

England could only muster 213, with India winning by six wickets helped by Yashpal Sharma (61) and Sandeep Patil (51no).

Even more sensationally, India went on to stun the mighty West Indies in the final at Lord's.

Bowled out for 183, India hit back to dismiss the red hot favourites for just 140.

Madan Lal (3-31) claimed the prize scalp of Viv Richards (33) while Mohinder Amarnath cleaned up the tail with 3-12.

1987

England reached their second final, and suffered their second final defeat.

For the first time, the tournament was played outside of England, in India, and for the first time games were 50-overs a side.

England won four of their six group games, beating both the West Indies and Sri Lanka twice but losing twice to group winners Pakistan.

Allan Lamb struck 67 in England's first World

Cup win over the Windies, with Graham Gooch top scoring with 92 in the second victory.

Gooch (84) and Lamb (76) also starred in one of the wins against Sri Lanka.

Gooch saved his best for the semi-final, though, scoring 115 as England posted 254-6 against an India side that had topped their group with five wins out of six.

Eddie Hemmings bagged 4-52 as the host nation's dream of retaining the trophy on home soil ended.

A close final saw Australia just edge Mike Gatting's England by seven runs.

David Boon top scored with 75 as the Aussies amassed 253-5.

Bill Athey (58), Lamb (45) and Gatting (41) all got a good start but no-one was able to convert it into a World Cup winning innings.

1992

Another new format for the fifth World Cup, and the first to be held in Australia and New Zealand.

All nine countries were in the same group, with everyone playing each other once and the top four progressing to the semi-finals.

England finished runners-up to New Zealand, winning five of their eight games.

They would no doubt have won six out of eight but for the game against Pakistan being rained off.

England had skittled their opponents for just 74, with Derek Pringle bagging 3-8, and were 24-1 in reply when the game was ended early.

England again beat the West Indies, Graham Gooch (65) and Graeme Hick (54) top scoring in a six-wicket success.

Skipper Gooch (58) and opening partner Ian Botham (53) set up an eight-wicket thrashing of Australia, Hampshire's Robin Smith unbeaten on 30 at the finish.

There was a farcical end to England's semi-final win against South Africa.

After England had posted 252 (Hick 83) off 45 overs, the Proteas reached 232-6 when rain stopped play after five balls of the 42nd over.

Two overs were lost and, when play resumed, the target remained unchanged.

South Africa needed 22 from the one ball that was left, and England were in their third final.

● Continues on page 42

Cricket Stats

SIX OF THE BEST WORLD CUP MATCHES

● From facing page.

FINAL, MARCH 17 1996, LAHORE - SRI LANKA BEAT AUSTRALIA BY SEVEN WICKETS

Sri Lanka sensationally rewrote the world order with some outstanding performances in 1996, and their success was made all the sweeter by the fact Australia were their final victims. The Aussies had refused to play in Sri Lanka earlier in the tournament because of terrorist fears - and the islanders were offended. They responded by sweeping to the final on a wave of exhilarating and fearless cricket. But when they lost two early wickets - including man-of-the-moment Sanath Jayasuriya - in response to Australia's 241, the entertainment seemed over. Aravinda de Silva had different ideas, however, and ruthlessly punished an increasingly frustrated Australian attack to win the match with a majestic, unbeaten 107.

SEMI-FINAL, JUNE 17 1999, EDGBASTON - AUSTRALIA BEAT SOUTH AFRICA ON NET RUN-RATE AFTER MATCH FINISHED TIED

Perhaps still the most dramatic finish in the history of one-day cricket saw eventual champions Australia scrape through to the final on Super Six net run-rate after both sides had been bowled out for the same score.

The Aussies' dramatic late charge through the tournament looked over as Lance Klusener, pictured, bludgeoned his way to 31 in 14 balls to all but settle the game. Klusener levelled the scores at 213 in the final over, but a rush of blood resulted in Allan Donald being run out with two balls to spare - and the Aussies celebrated.



GROUP B, FEBRUARY 27 2011, BANGALORE - INDIA V ENGLAND, MATCH TIED

This second fixture for each team finished in a most improbable, high-scoring dead-heat. Sachin Tendulkar's 120 helped the hosts pile up 338 all out as England's bowlers wilted - with the notable exception of Tim Bresnan, who took five for 48 as India lost their last seven wickets in under four overs. Captain Andrew Strauss gave the England reply a wonderful start, hitting a career-best 158. But Zaheer Khan returned to see off Ian Bell for 69 and then Strauss too with a brilliant delivery, before England number 10 Ajmal Shahzad struck his first ball from Munaf Patel for six in the last-over scramble as England tied the scores with eight down. Strauss's men returned to the same venue three days later to lose another astonishing run-fest to their minnow neighbours Ireland, before bowing out of the competition with a limp quarter-final defeat to Sri Lanka. India won their second World Cup, and first on home soil, beating Sri Lanka in the final.

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Cricket Stats

FIVE TO WATCH AT THE WORLD CUP

THE Sports Pink picks out the men who will make the difference at the World Cup:

STEVE SMITH

Smith has taken his time to mature but is now a cricketer of the very highest echelon. Initially a leg-spinning all-rounder - and for some time uncharitably regarded as almost a specialist fielder - he is now undroppable as a frontline batsman. Made a century in each of four Tests against India, the last three while captaining his country for the first time with Michael Clarke injured, and added another to brilliantly underpin a Tri-Series win over England in Hobart. A deserving winner of the Allan Border Medal for the outstanding Australian cricketer of the year, and took both the Test and one-day prizes to boot.

AB DE VILLIERS

The South Africa captain is arguably the form player in the world across all formats, with the stand-out moment coming when he re-wrote the 50-over record books against the West Indies last month. De Villiers was the fastest man to reach 50 (16 balls) and 100 (31 balls) in an ODI en route to a score of 149 in his side's 439 for two in Johannesburg. It followed a knock of 81 in the previous game and two big hundreds in the prior Test series, and the two sides' Pool B clash on February 27 will be well worth watching - especially with Windies blaster Chris Gayle also in the mix.

VIRAT KOHLI

If India are to finally play to their potential in a tournament Down Under, their vice-captain will be an important figure. Tri-series scores of nine, four, three not out and eight do not bode well, but he made four centuries in the preceding Test series against Australia and has a one-day international average over 50. The likes of Shikhar Dhawan and Mahendra Singh Dhoni have all the big shots in the book but Kohli's quality will have to show through if India are to consistently put the necessary runs on the board.

LASITH MALINGA

Not so much a fast bowler as a touse-haired slingshot producing yorkers on demand. Malinga's World Cup average is nearly 10 runs lower than he has produced across all ODIs and while that is partly a product of his toe-crushers proving too much for unprepared associate sides - he took three for 10 against Bermuda in 2007 and six for 38 against Kenya four years later, including a hat-trick - Malinga saves his best for the big occasion and is a spectacular sight when in full flow.

KANE WILLIAMSON

With captain Brendon McCullum tailing off through the seven-match series with Sri Lanka and eventually resting for the final match, the man who deputised as skipper has also been the co-hosts' form batsman. He is less spectacular - his classical style, married to dynamic fielding and effective bit-part off-spin, makes him a near-replica of England's Joe Root - but with scores of 103, 97 and 54 in that series following 123, 70 and 97 against Pakistan before Christmas, New Zealand will be counting on Williamson.

● From page 39

It ended the same way as the other two had - in defeat. Pakistan, who had only won half their group games in finishing fourth, reached their first final after shocking group winners New Zealand.

Captain Imran Khan came in at No 3 to whack 72 as Pakistan posted 249-6 in Melbourne.

In reply, Ian Botham was out for a duck but Neil Fairbrother (62) took up the challenge.

England eventually lost by 22 runs.

1996

Mike Atherton's England suffered a tournament to forget in India.

There was another new-look format, with two groups of six nations where the top four qualified for the quarter finals.

England beat the two 'minnows' in their group - the UAE and the Netherlands - but lost to New Zealand, Pakistan and South Africa.

Graeme Hick (104) and Graham Thorpe (89) starred against the Dutch, while Hick also scored 85 in the loss to the Kiwis.

Hampshire's Robin Smith top scored with 75 as England posted 249-9 against Pakistan.

But Saeed Anwar (71), Ijaz Ahmed (70) and Inzamam-ul-Haq (53no) saw Pakistan storm to a seven wicket success.

Qualifying fourth in their group, England faced Sri Lanka in the last eight and lost by five wickets.

Phil DeFreitas (67) top scored as England posted 235-8, with Sanish ST Jayasuriya striking 82.

Sri Lanka went on to claim a memorable victory, their first and so far only cricketing World Cup success.

After beating India in their semi final, Aravinda de Silva cracked 107 as Sri Lanka passed Australia's 241-7 target.

1999

The World Cup returned to England, but the host nation flopped.

Hampshire's Northlands Road was chosen as the venue for West Indies' win against New Zealand, Ridley Jacobs hammering an unbeaten 80 in his country's seven wicket win.

Elsewhere, England failed to qualify for the Super Six after finishing fourth out of six in their group.

They started well, beating defending champions Sri Lanka thanks to skipper Alec Stewart (88) and Graeme Hick (73no).

Nasser Hussain (88no) and Hick (61no) then helped England to a routine victory over Kenya.

England also beat Zimbabwe, who ended up above them in the group on run rate, but crucially lost, and lost comfortably, to South Africa and India.

There was a memorable semi final, where Australia tied with South Africa after both teams were bowled out for 213, Shaun Pollock taking 5-36 when the Aussies batted.

South Africa needed one to win off their last delivery, but Allan Donald was run out.

As a result, Australia progressed to the final by virtue of a better qualifying group record.

Former Hampshire skipper Shane Warne was voted man of the match as Australia thrashed Pakistan at Lord's to win the World Cup for the first time.

After taking 4-29 in the semi against South Africa, Warne bagged 4-33 as Pakistan were dismissed for 132.

Adam Gilchrist blazed 54 in reply as Australia romped to an eight wicket win with almost 30 of their 50 overs in hand.

2003

South Africa, Zimbabwe and Kenya hosted the World Cup for the first time.

The number of teams participating in the event increased from 12 to 14, but England again failed to qualify for the Super Sixes.

They forfeited their game against Zimbabwe, refusing to travel to Harare for safety reasons, and lost to India and



Who is destined for World Cup glory?

GLORY: Australian Cricket Captain Steve Waugh (left) celebrating after his side beat South Africa, in their Cricket World Cup semi-final match at Edgbaston in 1999.

Australia. Nick Knight and Michael Vaughan, pictured below, both hit 51 in a routine win against the Netherlands, while James Anderson's 4-29 burst helped England trounce Pakistan by 112 runs.

Former Hampshire all-rounder Andy Bichel was Australia's match-winner against England in remarkable style.

First, Bichel took 7-20 as England amassed 204-8.

Then, after Australia had slipped to 135-8, he came in at No 10 and cracked an unbeaten 34 off 36 balls.

Along with Michael Bevan (74no), Bichel put on an unbroken 73 for the ninth wicket.

The Aussies went on to retain the trophy, thrashing India in the final.

Ricky Ponting (140no) and Damien Martyn (88no) helped them post a huge 359-2 total in Johannesburg, en route to an eventual 125-run victory.

2007

For the first time, the World Cup was held in the West Indies.

The tournament was expanded again, this time to 16 countries with four groups of four.

The top two teams in each group progressed to a Super Eight series, with each country playing each other once.

England lost their

opening game to New Zealand, Kevin Pietersen top scoring with 60.

But they bounced back to beat Canada and Kenya with opener Ed Joyce hitting 66 and 75 respectively.

England's Super Eight campaign started well when Paul Collingwood's 90 helped them beat Ireland.

Despite Pietersen's 58, England then lost by just two runs to Sri Lanka.

Pietersen struck 104 in his next innings, against Australia, but Ricky Ponting (86) and Michael Clarke (55no) ensured it was a losing century.

England defeated Bangladesh before being hammered by South Africa.

Dismissed for 154, Graeme Smith struck an unbeaten 89 as the Proteas cantered to a nine wicket victory. Pietersen compiled his second century of the tournament as England finished with a remarkable win against the host nation. Chris Gayle blasted 79 as the Windies piled up 300 all out, with Pietersen leading England's reply with exactly 100.

Skipper Michael Vaughan added 79 as his side won by one wicket.

Australia became the first country to win the World Cup three times when they trounced Sri Lanka in the final.

Adam Gilchrist blasted 13 fours and eight sixes on his way to a superb 149 off only 104 balls, as Australia reached 281-4. Sri Lanka could only reply with 215-8.

2011

India became the first country to win the World Cup on home soil when they beat Sri Lanka by six wickets in the final in Mumbai.

The tournament was jointly hosted by India, Sri Lanka and Bangladesh.

Pakistan were stripped of their hosting rights following the terrorist attack on the Sri Lankan cricket team, with the games originally scheduled for Pakistan redistributed to the other host countries.

England endured a rollercoaster group campaign, losing to Ireland and Bangladesh for the first time ever in World Cup ties.

They piled up 327-8 against the Irish, yet still lost thanks to Kevin O'Brien hammering 113 off 63 balls with 13 fours and six sixes.

England also tied with the host nation after Sachin Tendulkar's 120 had seen India post a daunting 338.

Andrew Strauss struck a stunning 158 in reply, while Ian Bell contributed 69.

Having qualified for the quarter finals, England were humiliated by Sri Lanka in the last eight. Jonathan Trott top scored with 88 as England amassed 229-6.

Amazingly, Sri Lanka coasted into the semi finals without losing a wicket. Openers Tillakaratne Dilshan (110no) and Upul Tharanga (102no) saw England's World Cup dream die a miserable death.



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EMMA HEBBES

The 56 athletes who have been offered the full support package worth £3,315 in 2015 by Local Authority.

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Megan Brickwood, Royal Yachting Association Podium Potential Squad (sailing)
Kyle Finch, England U19 Squash squad
Emma Hebbes, England Volleyball Junior squad
Hannah Physick, GB Tae Kwon Do Development Squad

Fareham

Daniel Faulkner, England U21 Hockey squad
Yasmin Parsons, England U21 Netball squad
Ross Mackley, Royal Yachting Association National Youth Squad

Gosport

Jack Cairns, England Junior Angling Squad
David Scott, GB Goalball team New Forest
Emily Martin, Diving National Talent Squad
Sarah White, GB Diving Junior Team
Max Cater, Tae Kwon Do Team
England member
Kathy Rogers, GB Waterpolo U19 squad
Ian Payne, Ranked 5th in the world for Wheelchair tennis

Test Valley

William Smith, GB Canoeing Junior team
Katie George, England Cricket U19 Development Programme
Adam Knott, GB Goalball team
David Knott, GB Goalball team
Christopher Marfell, Tumbling World Age Games Champion (gymnastics)
Jenna Barrett, British Tumbling Champion (gymnastics)
Lizzie Gittens, England U21 Hockey team

Winchester

Kelly Simm, Commonwealth Games Gymnastics Gold with Team England
Louise Damen, 7th in the marathon at the Commonwealth Games
Ross Green, ranked 2nd in England for U18 Badminton
Annie Lado, U13 England Badminton team
Libby McMorrough, England U17 Badminton team
Hannah Knapton, England U17 Football team
Jared Carter, England Squash Development Programme
Adam Corcoran, England Squash Select team



JARED CARTER

Hampshire Talented Athlete Scheme paying out BACKING TALENT

Simon Carter

simon.carter@dailyecho.co.uk

SPORTS EDITOR

THE Hampshire Talented Athlete Scheme has just paid out over £185,000 to some of the most promising youngsters in the county.

Fifty six athletes across a range of sports have been given the full sponsorship package worth £3,315.

In all, more than 200 people have been given funding or support through the HTAS scheme for 2015.

The programme has seen its funds doubled thanks to extra funding from Hampshire County Council's Olympic Legacy Programme. 240 athletes have been accepted onto the scheme, which is co-ordinated by Sport Hampshire & IOW.

It is designed to support young athletes by helping to reduce the financial burden on them and their families.

The level of support varies depending on the performance level of the athlete.

Former members who have benefited from Hampshire's scheme include Olympic gold medal cyclist Dani King, originally from Hamble, and Southampton-born Olympic bronze medal hockey star Alex Danson.

The County Council's Olympic Legacy programme was launched in July 2013, with the help of King, and has awarded HTAS £92,000 per year for the next three years as an investment in Hampshire's talented athletes. The money helps support local athletes with training, sports science, travel and physiotherapy as well as monetary grants.

Over 1,150 of Hampshire's most promising sportsmen and women have received support via the scheme since 2004.

One of the new crop of 56 athletes chosen, Winchester's Louise Damen, is ranked second in the UK for marathon running.

Damen, who last weekend won the South of England senior ladies cross country title, said: "HTAS has been hugely beneficial to me as an athlete.

"It has facilitated my training by limiting the number of barriers that I face, enabling me to focus 100 per cent on achieving my goals.

"I am able to access local sports facilities free of charge and have also received some much appreciated financial assistance which will help to fund an altitude training camp this year.

"This support will certainly help me towards my goal of running an Olympic qualifying time for the marathon in 2015."

National and international level athletes can receive a range of benefits, including a cash grant, free access to leisure centres, fast track physio-

therapy, free bus travel from local companies, Stagecoach, Bluestar and First, as well as sports science support from Southampton Solent University.

Regional and county level performers can also benefit from fast track physiotherapy services.

At a time when costs associated

with training and competition are on the increase, the scheme is seen by many current and previous recipients as a much-needed injection of support.

Vikki Payne, from Havant, in the Royal Yachting Association Podium Potential Squad, said: "HTAS has continued to support me through Youth and now at Olympic level sailing through various workshops and Sport Science support.

"The gym membership support has enabled me to train regularly and effectively which has had a huge contribution to my development.

"My goal for 2015 is to stand on the podium at the Youth World Championships."

Hampshire County Council's Executive Member for Culture, Recreation and Countryside, Councillor Keith Chapman, said: "Hampshire has a strong sporting heritage, with many exceptional sportsmen and women living in the county.

"The Hampshire Talented Athlete Scheme goes some way to providing much needed support to these committed, talented and determined sportsmen and women.



YASMIN PARSONS



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£185,000 to help promising youngsters WITH CASH...



GOING THE DISTANCE: Louise Damen is ranked second in the UK for marathons.

"We look forward to watching the progress of our local athletes towards achieving their sporting ambitions and perhaps producing some home grown Olympians for the Rio 2016 Olympics."

Athletes are also offered public speaking training which prepares them to deliver inspiring school assemblies.

In 2014, over 50 schools received an assembly with an overwhelmingly posi-

tive response from both the schools and the athletes.

The assemblies are themed around aspirations and resilience and aim to provide local role models for children and young people in Hampshire.

Councillor Peter Edgar, Hampshire County Council's Executive Member for Education added: "In Hampshire every young person matters."

"We want them to all achieve their sporting potential, whether they become an Olympic athlete or whether to take up a sport for their pleasure for the rest of their lives. There are educational benefits and health benefits by being active and

we believe that sport is of the maximum importance for the full development of young people in Hampshire.

"Hampshire County Council has over the years put millions of pounds into sporting facilities for our schools."

"The Council supports the Hampshire Schools Partnership which hosts the Hampshire and Isle of Wight Games every year, in which all schools, whether in the private sector, or the public sector, are invited to participate."

Athletes can apply to HTAS all year round for support services. Visit www.sport Hampshire iow.co.uk/talentedathletes for further details.



GOLDEN GIRL: Commonwealth games gymnastics medallist Kelly Sims.



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HT 1-1	Att 26,267
Derby City 4	Bolton 1
Ince 39,47, Hendrick 45,68	Twardzik 51
HT 2-0	Att 30,310
Fulham 1	Birmingham 1
Rodallega 5	Cotterill 14
HT 1-1	
Leeds Utd 0	Brentford 1
HT 0-0	Pritchard 65, Att 23,164
Middlesbro 3	Charlton 3
Barnford 6, Vossen 48	Gudmundsson 37
Tomlin 88	
HT 1-1	Att 18,903
Millwall 1	Huddersfield 1
Maierhofer 28	Scannell 17, Butterfield 74
	Vaughan 86 pen
HT 1-1	Att 10,281
Norwich 4	Blackpool 0
Hooper 12,24,56 pen	Redmond 90
HT 2-0	Att 26,017
Rotherham 2	Ipswich 0
Derbyshire 38, Sammon 64	
HT 1-0	Att 10,336
Sheff Wed 1	Cardiff 1
Keane 75 pen	Jones 7
HT 0-1	Att 22,344
Watford 1	Blackburn 0
Ighalo 83	
HT 0-0	Att 15,011
Wigan 1	CHERRIES 3
Clarke 60	Wilson 37,57, Kermorgant 41
HT 0-2	Att 10,621
Wolves 1	Reading 2
Afope 26	Pogrebnyak 1, Williams 70
HT 1-1	Att 20,274

Norwich	4	Blackpool	0
Hooper 12.24.56 pen			
Redmond 90			
HT 2-0		Att 26,017	
Rotherham	2	Ipswich	0
Derbyshire 38, Sammon 64			
HT 1-0		Att 10,336	
Sheff Wed	1	Cardiff	0
Keane 75 pen		James 7	
HT 0-1		Att 22,344	
Watford	1	Blackburn	0
Ighalo 83			
HT 0-0		Att 15,011	
Wigan	1	CHERRIES	3
Clarke 60		Wilson 37.57, Kermorgant 41	
HT 0-2		Att 10,621	
Wolves	1	Reading	2
Afofe 26		Pogrebnyak 1, Williams 70	
HT 1-1		Att 20,274	

SkyBet League One

Colchester 2	Crewe 3
Porter 45	Jones 68
Marriott 84	Ajose 73
HT 1-0	Att 3,134
Doncaster 0	Walsall 2
	Cook 3
	Hiwula 70
HT 0-1	Att 6,089
Fleetwood Town 1	Peterboro 1
Roberts 78	Newell 64
HT 0-0	Att 3,188
Gillingham 2	Sheff Utd 0
McGlashan 86	
McDonald 90	
HT 0-0	Att 5,704
M K Dons 0	Bristol C 0
HT 0-0	Att 15,642
Notts Cnty 0	Chesterfld 1
	Lavery 67
HT 0-0	Att 6,649
Port Vale 2	Bradford 2
Campion 58	Hanson 41
O'Connor 90 pen	Morais 65
HT 0-1	Att 5,205
Preston 1	Coventry 0
Davies 21	
HT 1-0	Att 13,363
Rochdale P	Leyton O P
Postponed - due to a frozen pitch.	
Scunthorpe 0	Oldham 1
	Winchester 84
HT 0-0	Att 4,125
Swindon 2	Barnsley 0
Branco 14	
Gladwin 85	
HT 1-0	Att 8,380
Yeovil 2	Crawley 1
Ugwu 66	McLeod 27
Leitch-Smith 72	
HT 0-1	Att 3,807

	P	W	D	L	F	A	W	D	L	F	A	Pt
Bristol C	27	10	2	1	25	9	7	5	2	25	13	58
Swindon	28	9	3	2	26	13	8	3	3	28	14	57
M K Dons	28	10	3	2	36	12	6	5	2	23	13	56
Preston	28	7	6	1	24	15	7	2	5	18	13	50
Chesterfld	28	7	4	3	24	16	4	5	5	18	20	42
Oldham	28	6	4	3	21	18	4	6	5	18	21	40
Sheff Utd	26	6	4	3	16	11	5	2	6	16	19	39
Rochdale	26	4	3	6	17	17	7	2	4	30	18	38
Bradford	27	4	4	6	17	19	6	4	3	18	13	38
Peterboro	28	5	3	6	15	18	6	2	6	20	17	38
Fleetwood	29	5	7	3	16	15	5	1	8	12	14	38
Walsall	28	4	5	5	15	17	5	5	4	14	12	37
Doncaster	27	3	4	6	9	15	6	3	3	19	18	36
Port Vale	29	7	3	5	22	20	3	3	8	14	22	36
Barnsley	28	7	2	5	26	22	3	6	8	11	19	35
Notts Cnty	28	4	2	8	15	20	5	3	6	15	15	35
Gillingham	29	7	4	4	25	21	2	4	8	13	23	35
Scunthorpe	26	4	2	7	12	20	5	4	4	25	22	33
Crewe	28	5	3	6	14	24	4	2	8	14	27	32
Coventry	29	4	6	4	15	19	3	4	8	14	21	31
Colchester	28	3	2	9	16	25	4	5	5	18	21	28
Yeovil	29	3	5	7	8	20	4	2	8	15	21	28
Crawley	29	5	4	6	16	20	1	4	10	11	29	27
Leyton O	27	2	3	8	16	22	4	5	5	19	21	26

	P	W	D	L	F	A	W	D	L	F	A	Pt
Bristol C	27	10	2	1	25	9	7	5	2	25	13	58
Swindon	28	9	3	2	26	13	8	3	3	28	14	57
M K Dons	28	10	3	2	36	12	6	5	2	23	13	56
Preston	28	7	6	1	24	15	7	2	5	18	13	50
Chesterfld	28	7	4	3	24	16	4	5	5	18	20	42
Oldham	28	6	4	3	21	18	4	6	5	18	21	40
Sheff Utd	26	6	4	3	16	11	5	2	6	16	19	39
Rochdale	26	4	3	6	17	17	7	2	4	30	18	38
Bradford	27	4	4	6	17	19	6	4	3	18	13	38
Peterboro	28	5	3	6	15	18	6	2	6	20	17	38
Fleetwood	29	5	7	3	16	15	5	1	8	12	14	38
Walsall	28	4	5	5	15	17	5	5	4	14	12	37
Doncaster	27	3	4	6	9	15	6	3	3	19	18	36
Port Vale	29	7	3	5	22	20	3	3	8	14	22	36
Barnsley	28	7	2	5	26	22	3	6	8	11	19	35
Notts Cnty	28	4	2	8	15	20	5	3	6	15	15	35
Gillingham	29	7	4	4	25	21	2	4	8	13	23	35
Scunthorpe	26	4	2	7	12	20	5	4	4	25	22	33
Crewe	28	5	3	6	14	24	4	2	8	14	27	32
Coventry	29	4	6	4	15	19	3	4	8	14	21	31
Colchester	28	3	2	9	16	25	4	5	5	18	21	28
Yeovil	29	3	5	7	8	20	4	2	8	15	21	28
Crawley	29	5	4	6	16	20	1	4	10	11	29	27
Leyton O	27	2	3	8	16	22	4	5	5	19	21	26

SkyBet League Two

AFC Wimbledn .. 2	Newport County 0
Akinfenwa 11,72	
HT 1-0	Att 3,817
Bury 1	Exeter 1
Nardiello 45	Davies 13
HT 1-1	Att 3,513
Cambridge 0	Wycombe 1
	Ephraim 53



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